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ON THE FLAT AND ACROSS COUNTRY.

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R I D I N G:

ON THE FLAT AND ACROSS COUNTRY.

A GUIDE TO PRACTICAL HORSEMANSHIP.

BY

M. HORACE HAYES,

(*Late Captain "THE BUFFS"*),

AUTHOR OF "VETERINARY NOTES FOR HORSE-OWNERS," AND "TRAINING
AND HORSE MANAGEMENT IN INDIA."

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TRAININ

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The Veterinary Journal.
Captain Hayes' book on 'Horses.'

P R E F A C E.

As my object in writing this book has been to teach the Art of Riding in a "workmanlike" manner, I have described, with certain necessary modifications, the system adopted by our best steeplechase and flat-race riders, which is the only one that will enable the horseman to cross the most difficult "country" with the utmost safety, and to cover the longest distance with the greatest ease to himself and to the animal on which he is mounted.

Although many books have been written on military equitation, no systematic work treating of our essentially English style of riding, whether practised in the hunting field, "between the flags," or on the racecourse, has appeared previous to the present one, which I trust will

meet, to some extent, this literary want. Emboldened by the success of a book I wrote on Training and Racing in India, I have ventured to adapt a portion of it to my present purpose.

I am afraid that at the mention of race riding, many who have taken up this book may exclaim that they do not want to ride like jockeys, and will therefore throw it aside unread. I can, however, assure them that the modern style of steeplechase and race riding—as exemplified by Mr. Garratt Moore, Tom Cannon, and George Fordham, for instance—is the very best model for all ordinary requirements, although it need not be strictly copied in every detail.

I have much pleasure in taking this opportunity of thanking Mr. Stanley Berkley for his friendly labour in illustrating my ideas in this work; Mr. Edwin Martin, the well-known Newmarket trainer, for hints and corrections respecting the chapter on Race Riding; Mr. Nicholls, for his remarks on saddles, and for Figs.

.14 and 30; Mr. Benjamin Latchford, author of 'The Loriner,' for Figs. 17 to 22, 25, 27, 28 and 29; Mr. Tom Cannon, for help with the illustrations of the jockey's seat; and my friend, Captain Jones, for the racing incidents with which he furnished me from his own long personal experience. The drawing of a lady on horseback, is from an admirable painting by Mr. Herbert. I gratefully acknowledge the kind aid afforded me by several ladies of my acquaintance in writing the sixth chapter.

M. H. HAYES.

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RIDING.

CHAPTER I.

HORSEMANSHIP.

How to Hold the Reins—To Mount—To Dismount—The Seat—
Hands—Riding—Riding and Bridling Horses which have
Tricks or Vices.

How to Hold the Reins.

When only one hand is on the reins—the left, for instance—the near rein should be drawn between the third

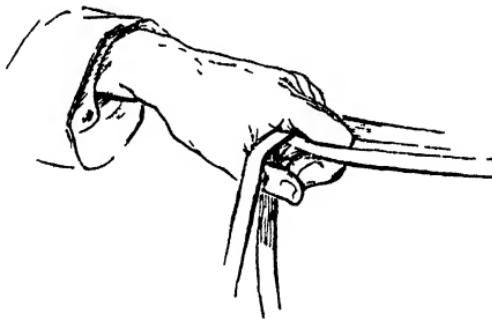
Fig. 1.



and little fingers, and brought out between the first finger and thumb; while the off rein should be placed over the palm of the hand, so that both reins may cross on it.

The knuckles should now be turned up, and the hand held as in Fig. 2, except that the knuckles should be at about an angle of 45° to the ground, and not horizontal as here shown, which would cause the elbow to be turned out, and the arm consequently to work at a mechanical disadvantage. If the knuckles be kept in a vertical position, as in military riding, see Fig. 6, the "play" of

Fig. 2.

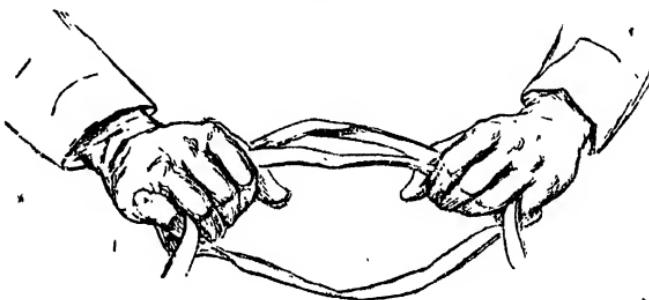


the wrist will be from side to side, and not forward and backward as it ought to be. Shifting the bit about in the mouth, by any lateral action of the rider's hand, will tend to prevent the animal from "going up to his bridle." The hand should be allowed to drop easily from the wrist, while the elbow works in a line with the side. The hand will then be in the most comfortable position; will be able to exert its strength to the best

advantage; and can freely "give and take" to the movements of the horse's head.

When both hands are used, the off rein is taken up between the third and little fingers of the right hand,

Fig. 3.



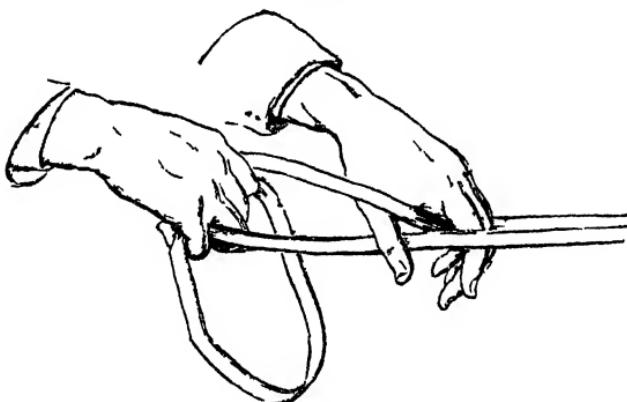
while the "slack" of the near rein passes between its first finger and thumb. Both hands will now have exactly the same hold on the reins.

To shorten the reins, when they are held in both hands, and when the horse is not pulling hard, the hands may be simply drawn apart, while the hold of the first, second and third fingers of the hands on their respective reins is loosened, and that of the little fingers is tightened on the free part of the reins, which action will naturally cause the hands to slide forward. When the proper length is obtained, the first, second and third fingers of each hand should close on their respective reins. The hands should

then be brought together in their original position, while the slack of the near rein is allowed to slip through the right hand, and the slack of the off, through the left. This method is specially applicable to our purpose when we are obliged to shorten the reins, and desire, at the same time, to interfere as little as possible with the horse's mouth.

If the rider wants to shorten his reins quickly, especially if he is riding a horse which requires some holding,

Fig. 4.



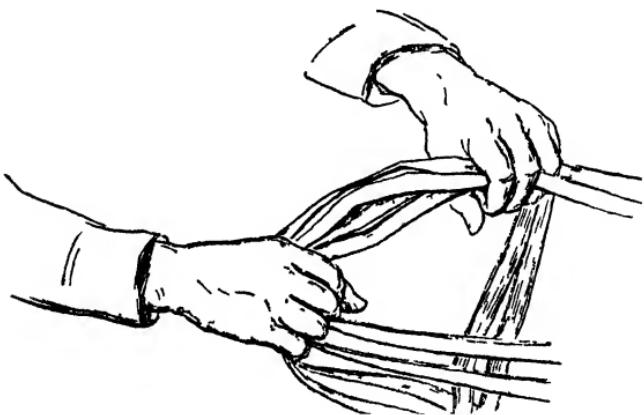
he should let go the slack of the off rein with, for instance, his left hand, which he should slip forward on the near rein, and, having got the proper length, he should take the off rein between the first finger and thumb of the left hand, so that the reins may be held "crossed" as in Fig. 4. The



right hand now quits its hold, and takes up its original position on the reins. The left hand is carried forward with a somewhat circular movement, so that an "even feeling" with both reins may be maintained, the whole time, on the horse's mouth.

With double reins held in one hand, the forefinger of the left hand separates the two off reins, while the third finger divides the two near reins, and *vice versa*. The reins are crossed, as with the single rein. It is convenient to have the reins, on which we want to have the strongest pull, on the outside, while the other reins—the curb ones, for instance—are kept apart by the second finger.

FIG. 5.



Double reins are held by both hands, as depicted in the above drawing; or, both reins may be used as one.

When the reins of a *double bridle* are held in both hands, it is well to have the snaffle reins on the outside, and the curb reins, lengthened out an inch or two, on the inside.

I may remark that the rider, if he chooses, may have the near rein (when only one hand is used) pass outside of the little finger, instead of between it and the third finger. Or, when both hands are employed, the outside reins may pass over the little fingers of each respective hand, instead of between them and the third fingers.

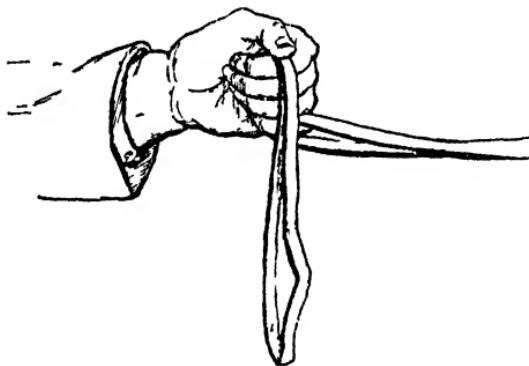
If, when both hands are on a single pair of reins, the rider wishes to take them up with only one hand—the left, for instance—he may let go the slack of the off rein with his left hand, and may pass the off rein into it, by sliding his right hand back along this rein, and carrying it behind the left hand before quitting it. Or, the reins may be taken up with one hand, in the manner described on page 4. The first method is applicable for cross-country and ordinary riding; the second, for “finishing,” when the reins have to be shortened, at the same time as they are taken up by one hand.

Double reins may be shifted into one hand in the same manner.

By adopting the system I have described, the rider will be enabled to obtain the firmest possible hold on the reins, while he can, with precision and rapidity, effect every necessary change of grip, without disturbing in the slightest the "even feeling" on the animal's mouth which is essential to all fine horsemanship.

In *military equitation*, the cavalry man is taught to maintain his hold on the reins by the lateral pressure of

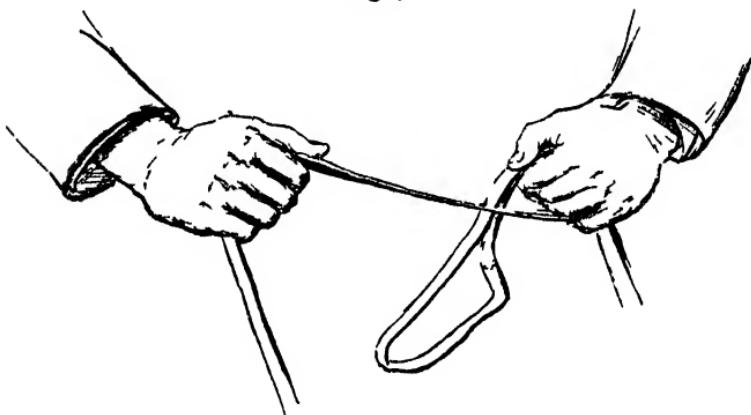
Fig. 6.



his fingers, and by the downward pressure of the thumb on them. The reins are divided by the little finger, and are brought up through the hand between the forefinger and thumb. It goes without saying that this method, or any modification of it, is far more tiring to the hand, and affords a much less firm grip on the reins,

than our cross country and flat race style. It is fairly well adapted for its special purpose, namely, that of enabling the trooper to shorten the reins at will, with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, whose other fingers are supposed to be occupied with the sabre or lance. It is, however, wholly inapplicable to two-handed riding, for, if the horseman wishes to use both

Fig. 7.



hands, he is obliged to lengthen out the off rein, in order to get an "even feeling" on both reins, as in Fig. 7.

If the rider has, now, to quit the reins with the right hand, as, for instance, when he is about to use the whip, he cannot take up the reins in the left hand in the same prompt and secure manner, as he can by the "crossed" method. I need hardly point out that any "fumbling"

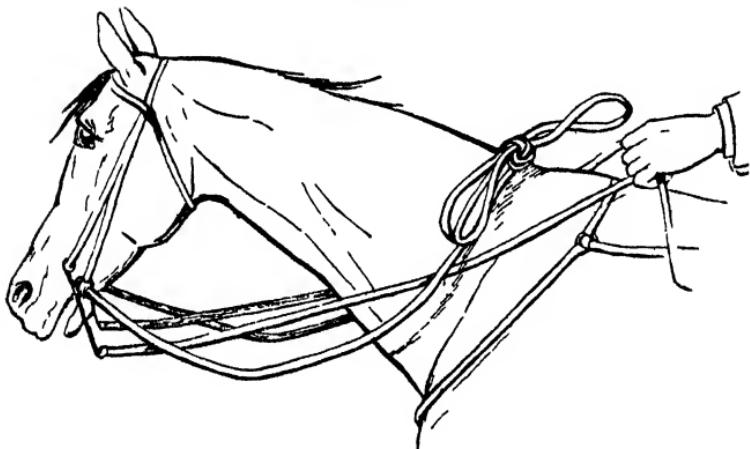
with the reins, when they are being changed from one hand to another, would be quite sufficient for a jockey to lose a race, or for a hunting man to fail to prevent a refusal at a fence. It frequently happens, in the hurry of the moment, that the rider who adopts the "school" system, neglects to shorten the off rein at all, and, consequently, pulls his horse round to the left, by reason of the near rein being shorter than the off. Another objection is that one hand has got quite a different hold on the reins, to that which the other has. When the reins are "crossed," both hands have identically the same hold, while the off rein can be passed into the left hand in an instant.

On this subject, Colonel Greenwood, in his excellent work, 'Hints on Horsemanship,' pertinently remarks, that "Even our finest two-handed English riders (who, in my opinion, are the finest riders in the world), when they use the right hand on the right rein, continue to hold both reins with the left hand, and then slip the right rein a little through the left hand in order to place both hands even. This is a most vicious habit. When they quit the right rein to use the whip, or to throw the arm back at a fence (another most vicious habit), by their system of holding and handling the reins they have not the power to place the *lengthened* right rein

short in the left hand. Alas, poor horse! he is then pulled to the left by the left rein, driven to the left by the whip on the right, and then abused for answering their *natural* indication, which he has been trained *habitually* to obey."

With double reins, when the rider wishes to use only one rein, he may put a *slipknot* on the other, at the desired

Fig. 8.



length, so that he may have it ready to take up at any moment. It should be put well forward on the neck, so that the horse, in extending his head, may not be liable to bear suddenly on the bit to which the reins with the slipknot are attached. "The reins should never be tied in hunting, or in swimming a horse, since, by catching

across the neck, they act like a bearing rein, and oblige the horse to carry his head up and his nose in. In hunting this would bring his hind legs on his fences, and oblige him to leap from the top of his banks and to land all fours, instead of extending himself and letting himself down gently. In swimming it obliges him to keep his whole head and neck out of water. I very nearly drowned a horse in this way in the Serpentine" (*Colonel Greenwood*).

As a rule, a man should ride with both hands on the reins.

To Mount.

When standing still.—The rider should place himself at the horse's near shoulder, take up the reins with the left hand, and lay hold of the mane a little in front of the withers. He should take the stirrup in the right hand, at the part where the leather goes through the eye of the iron. The left foot is placed in the stirrup, while the rider faces to the rear. If his legs be very short, he may have to stand close to the horse's flank, so as to reach the stirrup with his left foot. In this position, however, he will run the risk of being cow-kicked if the horse be vicious. If he be tall, com-

pared to his horse, he should place his right hand well over on the off side of the cantle, so that he may not disarrange the position of the saddle when mounting. If he be very short, he may not be able to reach the cantle at all, and, in that case, will be obliged to steady himself by means of the flap of the saddle. He should, if tall enough, spring smartly up into an erect position, with his foot in the stirrup, his left hand on the mane, and his right on the off side of the cantle. He should swing his right leg over, knee nearly, if not quite straight, while at the same moment, he should let go the cantle. His left hand now quits the mane, and his right foot takes the stirrup. If the horse be fidgety, the rider may have to steady the off stirrup, with his right hand, while the right foot is being put into the iron. It looks very slovenly for the rider, when throwing his right leg over, to do so with a bent knee. All appearance of "climbing" into the saddle, in a laboured manner, should be avoided. Care should be taken not to touch the horse with the point of the left toe when mounting, nor with the right foot when taking up the stirrup. One should never make a practice of putting the left foot in the stirrup, before getting on, without first steadyng the iron with the right hand, for, if this

be done, the horse, if at all fidgety, will be rendered unsteady by the rider poking his toe at him in this way. If the animal be difficult to mount, the rider, when he takes up the reins and places his left hand on the mane, may have to shorten one of the reins—the off one generally—more than the other, so as to prevent the horse from whipping round. When the rider has his left foot in the stirrup, his left hand on the mane, and his right on the cantle, he should, if at all active, be able to get into the saddle, or rest himself, foot in stirrup, even if the horse moves forward, or begins to “dance about.” He cannot, however, do this, if, as some instructors teach, he holds the pommel of the saddle instead of the mane, with his left hand; for the space between his two hands would, then, be too short for him to balance himself properly.

Mounting without stirrups, and with, or without, a saddle, may be accomplished in the manner described on page 15, for mounting during movement. Mounting by placing the left hand on the pommel and the right on the cantle, and then supporting the weight of one's body on both hands, before throwing one's right leg over, may do well enough with a steady school horse, but it is a dangerous and unworkmanlike proceeding with any animal which is not a mere machine; for if the

horse moves after the would-be rider has made his spring up, and before he is safely in the saddle, he will run the risk of getting a fall, or of having to let go his horse; while, with the left hand on the mane, and the right hand on the pommel, even if one fails to mount, the horse cannot, very well, break away.

“Getting a leg up.”—A man should always get a leg up, especially if he be at all heavy, with a light saddle, say, one not over 4 lbs. weight, as mounting in the ordinary manner would be very apt to damage it. With a racing saddle, the jockey should take the reins in his left hand, and place it on the mane if he can reach it. If tall enough, he should place the flat of his right hand on the centre of the saddle, and not on the cantle, lest by bearing his weight on it he might hurt the tree. He should then bend his left knee and raise his foot, while the man who is going to give him a leg up, should take hold of his raised leg, just above the foot, with his right hand, or, if the rider be comparatively heavy, he may place his forearm underneath the jockey’s left leg, close to the foot, steadyng himself, the while, with his left hand on the horse’s mane, and should raise him up without giving him any jerk, which might cause him to come heavily down on the saddle, or

might cant him over to the other side. The jockey being raised to the proper height, brings his right leg over the saddle while steadyng himself with his left hand on the mane, and the flat of his right hand on the centre of the saddle. He then sinks carefully down into the seat and takes his stirrups. If the saddle be a 2 lb. one, the jockey, when getting into it, should bear the weight of his body on his thighs, and should not plump suddenly down in the saddle lest he might injure the tree. The same method of mounting may be adopted with any other kind of saddle, though the precautions I have described against breaking it need not be strictly observed.

To mount during movement, the rider should, as directed by Colonel Greenwood, hold the mane and reins in his left hand and the pommel with his right, and then spring into the saddle. The faster the pace, the easier it can be done. This is a very simple feat to do, and is a most useful one to learn. Being able to mount in this manner may, after a fall, save one from being "thrown out" during a "run," or from losing a steeplechase.

To Dismount.

Place the left hand with the reins on the mane, and the right hand on the front of the right flap of the saddle. Take the right foot out of the stirrup, and swing the leg, with the knee straight, over the cantle, place the right hand on the off side of the cantle, and make a pause for an instant, while holding the body erect. The right foot is, then, brought on the ground, and the left foot is removed from the stirrup. The right hand is placed on the front of the off flap, and on the off side of the cantle, in preference to placing it on the pommel and on the back of the cantle, both for safety sake, in the event of the horse making any violent or unexpected movement, and to avoid the risk of causing the saddle to shift its position. I have taken for granted that the rider is of average height. It looks very awkward for a man, when dismounting, to bring his right leg, with a bent knee, over the saddle, and to get off "all of a heap." When dismounting, as well as when mounting, the body should be kept erect, and the different movements should be performed with smartness and precision, although without any appearance of stiffness or ex-

aggerated gesture. Every motion of the horseman ought to be characterised by grace.

“To dismount in movement,” Colonel Greenwood says, “lay the reins on the neck, one or both knotted short; take the pommel with the left hand, the cantle with the right; pass the right leg over the neck, shift the right hand to the pommel, and, as you descend, the left hand to the flap. With the strength of both arms, throw your feet forward in the direction in which the horse is going. This may be done at a gallop.”

The Seat.

Experience teaches us that, when “sitting down” at the gallop or canter, or over fences, the rider should get his seat under him as much as possible, which will be done by keeping the body erect by the “play” of the hip joints, and not by hollowing out the back, for that would cause the seat to be stuck out behind, instead of being carried beneath the centre of gravity of the body.

He should force his fork well down into the saddle, with the hollow, and not the back of the thighs against the flaps. The knees should be well forward; the legs from the knee down, should be vertical, or, if anything, a ~~s~~newh~~s~~ewhat drawn back, while the feet should be parallel

to the sides of the horse, with the heels slightly depressed. The legs should be kept close to the horse's sides, so that a certain amount of grip may be obtained by the calves of the rider's legs. Many men from being told to grip with their knees, endeavour to do so, while, at the same time, they stick their feet, as far as possible, away from the horse's sides. The foot should be neither turned away from, or brought close to, the horse's side, but should be kept in the same perpendicular plane as the knee. If this be not done, it will be impossible to ride by balance. The feet, except when spurs are used, ought to be kept quite steady, and on no account be allowed to work backwards and forwards. The shoulders should be kept square to the front, and "down"; the body and head erect, and the loins braced up, but without any approach to stiffness in the attitude. The rider will then be in the best position in which to conform to the movements of his animal, and in the most difficult one from which to be dislodged. The muscles of the hands, arms, and shoulders should be free from all stiffness, so that the rider may give and take with every movement of the horse's head and neck, while the elbows should work close to the sides. The act of sticking out the elbows is not alone }

graceful, but it also causes the arms to work at a mechanical disadvantage, and obliges the rider to "round" his shoulders, which will naturally bring the weight forward, and will interfere with the free backward play of the body.

The length of the stirrups, with such a seat, will enable the rider to clear the pommel of the saddle easily when standing up in them, and, as a general rule, will cause the lower part of the stirrup irons to reach a little below the ankle joints, when the feet are taken out of the stirrups and allowed to hang down. In short, the length of the stirrups should be such as will assist the horseman in assuming a perfect seat, and cannot be determined by any fixed measurement. If the rider finds that when on a puller, at the gallop, he can get his knees well into the flaps of the saddle, draw his feet back, and in this manner exert his strength to the best advantage, he may rest assured that his stirrups are of the right length. Men with short, round thighs will, usually, require comparatively longer stirrups than those of an opposite conformation, for they need an increased amount of grip from the calf of the leg to aid that of the thigh and knee. They will, consequently, ride with a straighter leg.

“*Bumping*” up and down in the saddle is often caused by the rider advancing his feet, and putting too much weight on the stirrups. He will be liable, when in this position, to be jerked up out of his saddle, at each stride, by reason of the rigid nature of the stirrup leathers. If, on the contrary, he draws back his feet, and keeps his legs bent, and not straight, the “play” of the knee joints will tend to obviate the jerk communicated, by the stirrups, to the legs.

Except for park hacking, one should ride with the feet home in the stirrups, when going faster than the trot, at which pace the ball of the foot may rest on the iron, so that the ankle joint may “give” to the motion of the rider, when he rises in his stirrups.

At the slow canter, it looks, and certainly feels, best for the rider to lean his shoulders somewhat back; while doing so appears to me to be correct in theory, for keeping the weight forward might throw more strain on the leading fore leg than it could in safety bear. This pace is one of three time. Let us suppose that the off fore is leading. The action will then be as follows: (1) body supported by near hind; (2) by off hind and near fore; (3) by off fore. In the gallop, which is in four time, the hind legs make their stroke, almost,

though not quite, at the same moment; hence the necessity of the weight being off the loins at that instant (see page 185). When sitting down, at the gallop, the body should be slightly inclined forward, as in Plate I. (over-leaf), and should yield to the movement of the horse, so that the seat may not move up and down in the saddle. Mr. Berkley has endeavoured to depict in Plate I. the action of a horse as it actually is in the gallop, and not according to the usual conventional rendering.

When a rider is shifted in his seat, or falls off in the ordinary manner, he has a tendency to go, more or less, heels over head, as many of us know from practical experience. This is naturally caused by the portion of the body which is free to go forward, being above the centre of gravity of the body, while that—the legs—from which the grip is obtained, is well below it. The more, therefore, at any untoward movement of the horse, the rider brings his shoulders back, gets his seat beneath, not behind, the centre of gravity, and grips with his legs, so that the line of resistance to the onward motion may be as near the centre of gravity of the body as possible, the better chance will he have of remaining unshifted in his saddle. Hence the neces-



sity of bringing the shoulders back by the play of the hips, and not by hollowing out the small of the back ; of having the thighs well sloped ; knees well forward ; and, above all things, the feet back, for if that be not done, and the speed of the horse be checked at any moment, the feet will be forced on to the stirrups, and the resulting jerk will have every chance of toppling the rider over. If, on the contrary, the shock falls on the legs, with the feet drawn back, the "play" of the thighs, between which the saddle is forced as a wedge, will obviate the disturbing influence as much as possible.

Hands.

Whether one or both hands be used, it or they should be allowed to fall loosely from the wrist, with the line of the knuckles at an angle of about forty-five degrees with the ground (see page 2). When only one hand is employed, it should work, as nearly as possible, directly over the withers, so that an "even feeling" be kept on both sides of the mouth. When the two hands are on the reins, they should be kept eight or nine inches apart, and should be held one on each side of the withers, or but slightly raised. In all cases—except at a finish in a race, or when a horse bucks, kicks, or gets his

head too low—the hands should be kept “down,” in order to prevent the horse from carrying his head too high, for if he does so, he will, by altering the proper arrangement of the spinal column, seriously interfere with the action of the hindquarters.

While keeping a good hold of the horse's head, so as to make him go up to his bridle, the rider should “give and take” to every movement of the animal's head and neck, so that he may not be induced to think that the rider is pulling against him. He should, on the contrary, be taught by delicate handling of the reins to understand that the bit is not used as a means for applying force to overcome force, but rather for communicating the rider's wishes to the horse. Besides that, yielding to the movements of the animal with the hands, arms and body, will enable the horseman's weight to be carried smoothly forward without any up-and-down motion, which would cause an increased amount of work to be thrown on the horse, and would be unpleasant to the rider.

“*Bumping*” up and down in the saddle, which is often caused, when going at the canter or gallop (see page 20), by the rider sticking out his feet and keeping his legs straight, is, frequently, due to the rider maintaining

a rigid hold on the reins, which causes him to be pulled forward, by the horse advancing his head, at the moment his hind quarters make their stroke at each stride; while he naturally falls back again into his saddle, when the horse bends his neck and draws his hind quarters under him.

Every horseman should endeavour to acquire the possession of "good hands," which term is used to express the happy knack of using the reins so as to restrain the horse by delicate manipulation, and not by mere hauling at his mouth. Unless one has a sufficiently strong seat to enable one to be independent of the reins for remaining in the saddle, and have an unruffled temper and abundance of patience, it is impossible to have "good hands." Respecting this subject, see page 81.

Riding.

Learning to ride.—It is not at all imperative for a person to commence early in life in order to become a good horseman. Some of the straightest riders I have known, never mounted a horse before they were twenty-two or twenty-three. I must, however, admit that even they did not possess that extraordinary strength of

seat which I have observed only among' those who began to ride when they were boys. I attribute this to the fact that a high degree of proficiency in the art of balancing oneself, can be acquired only when a commencement is made in early youth. Riding is so essentially an affair of nerve and balance, that it is hopeless to except to become a brilliant performer in the saddle, unless one learns before one knows what fear is, and before one's joints have lost their pliability. Practice, however, can do a great deal, even to putting a man's heart in the right place, for the more familiarised we are with any form of danger, the less do we regard it.

Boys who have the opportunity, usually commence their first lessons in equitation on a donkey, or small pony, and by dint of many falls, and a little advice, get "shaken into their saddles." I well remember, when I was a small boy of eight or nine, my father's coachman, whom I regarded, at that time, as the highest authority on riding in the world, repeatedly telling me that I should never be able to ride until I had seventy-seven falls. I unfortunately lost count when I got into the twenties, so cannot exactly tell whether he was right or wrong, although I am certain that the "spills" I had, made me all the more keen. I believe that a few falls, provided

that they do not hurt too much, do a strong, stout-hearted boy a great deal of good, when he is learning to ride ; but, if the beginner be a man, or delicate youth, they are apt to destroy his confidence, which is the essential in riding ; while a bad fall will act prejudicially in all cases. This fact is well recognised among jockeys, some of whom I have heard remark about Archer, when alluding to his extraordinary pluck, that he retains his nerve, because he has not met with a bad accident, up to the present. I sincerely hope that he will never have the opportunity of showing his critics how wrong they are.

In order to give the grown-up beginner confidence, I would strongly advise that, to commence with, he should be put on a very easy horse, have a comfortable, broad-seated saddle covered with buckskin, and that he should be allowed to ride, at first, with stirrups. After a time, he might try the ordinary pigskin saddle, and have a change of horses. I may observe that the greater the variety of horses a man rides, the quicker will he acquire a strong seat. He should, above all things, avoid, from the very first, depending on the bridle for support, for that trick, once learned, will be very difficult, if not impossible, to be given up. He

should try to ride by balance, and not by grip, for if a continued effort be demanded of any set of muscles, they will, after a while, lose their wonted power, and be unable to act at, perhaps, the very moment their aid is required to save the rider from an accident. As soon as he feels somewhat "at home" in the saddle with stirrups, he should try to do without them, until he is able to ride perfectly well in this manner. He should, at first, take them up for only a short time, but should lengthen the periods as he improves, until he can ride in perfect safety and comfort, without the aid of the stirrups. Having acquired the necessary proficiency, there will be no object in his practising any longer in this way. The respective seats and styles of riding, with and without stirrups, differ so much, one from the other, that a man should thoroughly accustom himself only to the method (that with stirrups) he will habitually use. He should never, if he can help it, continue riding after he has become tired, for he will then be unable to maintain a proper seat, and will be apt to acquire a slovenly style. "The advantage of this mode of instruction [riding without stirrups] is, that it teaches, or, in fact obliges, a boy to balance his body, and sit still and firm in his seat,

without any other aid than nature has supplied him with ; and it obliges him to keep his legs motionless, for should he hold so loosely by his knees and thighs as to allow his legs to move or swing backwards and forwards on his saddle skirts, they would allow him to roll over the one or other side of the horse, and then the 'hope of the family' might be turned topsy-turvy. The next advantage derived from this plan is, it finally, in riding terms, gives a lad hands ; for so soon as he has learned a firm seat, and got in full confidence in this respect, his hands are as free and as much at liberty as if standing on the ground. For, however firm he may want to hold his horse by the head, to assist, support, or check him, he wants no hold by his own hands as a support, or stay, to his own body" (*Harry Hieover*).

"A firm seat is easily to be acquired without the vile habit of 'holding on by the bridle,' which, if once contracted, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to break a man of ; and until that was done, he would never be half a horseman" (*Harry Hieover*).

If a man has to ride in a light saddle, he should practise in one, for however firm he may be in a 10 or 12 lb. saddle, he will feel more or less uncomfortable

and insecure in a racing or light steeplechase one unless he be accustomed to it.

If the rider has to "get-up" in ordinary trousers, he may wind a flannel stable *bandage* about each knee to save the inside of it from getting cut, and to prevent the trousers from rucking up. The bandage is rolled above and below the knee and is secured with the tapes, while the knee cap is left free. When thus put on, it braces the knee and affords the rider a firm grip on the flaps of the saddle. *Knee pads* of a couple of thicknesses of leather, made to cover the insides of the knees, each one being provided with a couple of straps and buckles, are very convenient for the same purpose.

A beginner, when he feels insecure in his saddle, has often a strong tendency to steady himself by catching hold of the pommel, or even of the mane. If he requires some adventitious aid, he may be excused for putting one hand back and catching hold of the cantle of the saddle, for, by doing so, he will be enabled to keep his body from going forward, which is naturally the cause of ninety-nine falls in a hundred. If, however, he grasps the pommel or the mane, the fact of his doing so will cause the weight of his body to be carried forward ; he will then, although probably able to preserve his balance

from weight, will be carried too far to the rear. If, on the contrary, the rider adopts the military style, and presses, with his legs, the horse ^{up} to a bit, which is too severe for the animal to bear boldly against, or which he is trained, at the lightest touch of the reins, to yield and bend his neck to, the hind quarters, being brought well under the body, will have comparatively more work to do than the fore legs. As the strength of a chain is equal to only that of its weakest link, so are the powers of endurance of the horse equal to only those of that pair of limbs which will tire the soonest. Hence, we who desire to acquit ourselves as "workmen," should endeavour to ride in such a manner, that there will be a comparatively equal distribution of work between the hind and fore extremities. To do this, we should keep our legs close to the horse's sides, so as to keep him up to his bit, while we should always maintain a good hold of the reins. I am here referring, of course, to fast paces, and not to the walk. I have attempted, in the foregoing lines, to briefly indicate what the rider ought to do, not from any vain idea that horsemanship can be learnt from books alone, but from the firm conviction that the better the beginner understands what he has to do, the more readily

while the horse is going straight on at a uniform pace, be almost certain to fall off, if the animal suddenly checks his speed, turns sharply, or makes any unexpected movement. His fall, in any of these cases, will be accelerated by the fact of his holding on in front, but would be retarded by his grasping the cantle, which is, after all, but a choice between two evils, and should, if possible, be avoided.

The rider who wears spurs, and finds, especially when jumping, that, from time to time, he touches his horse on the shoulders with them, may rest assured that his legs swing about, instead of remaining steady, and that he is but a very indifferent performer in the pigskin.

I wish to direct the reader's particular attention to the art of *riding a horse up to his bridle*. I have tried on page 185, to explain why a man should always keep a good hold of his horse's head, and why he should never leave the reins loose during rapid movement. We may readily see that if a rider simply "hangs on" to the reins, the work which the fore and hind quarters will have to do, will be unequally distributed between them, the result being that the action of the fore legs will be cramped from too much weight being thrown on them, while the hind legs, being comparatively freed

will he learn it practically. I may divide bad riders into two classes: the one hang on to the reins and let the horse pull them along; while the others sit on their mount as if he were a kind of locomotive, and use the reins merely to guide and restrain him. The horseman, on the contrary, makes himself a part of the animal he bestrides, by conforming to his movements, and, thereby, assists in maintaining the natural equilibrium of the animal's body. It is most instructive to note these differences. When alluding to military riding, I, of course, refer to "school" practice, as I am well aware that the men of some of our smartest cavalry regiments are taught to take up, when occasion requires, the snaffle reins, and to ride in our English hunting style, the merits of which I am here advocating.

Beyond saying that the rider should have a good hold of the reins, keep his legs close to the horse's sides, so as to make him go up to his bridle, maintain a proper seat in the saddle, be patient and gentle with his animal, conform to his movements, and turn with him as he turns, so that the rider may be part and parcel of his horse, and not be carried as an inert burden—I have nothing more to add respecting the mere act of riding, which is essentially a practical one.

Management of the reins.—I have described, at the beginning of this chapter, how the reins ought to be held, and the position of the hands, on page 23. The rider ought, at all times, to give the horse the indication of his wishes in the clearest possible manner. If he wants him to go to the right, he should pull the right rein; if to the left, the left rein. In military riding (see page 7), the reins being held in one hand, the little finger separating them, it is impossible for this direct indication to be given, for do what the trooper will, he can shorten the near rein only to an extent equal to the thickness of his little finger, say three-quarters of an inch, which it would be absurd to suppose would be sufficient to *oblige* the horse to turn his head round to the left, while the right rein cannot be shortened at all. Hence, the pressure of the reins on the neck has to be used as an indication for turning. Thus, if the cavalryman wants his horse to go to the right, he presses the near rein on the near side of the neck, and *vice versa*. His horse, if well trained, will obey this reversed (if I may use the expression) indication in an admirable manner, even in the excitement of “action.” A high-spirited, generous-going horse, however, bitted and trained in the best possible manner

for ordinary riding, will, almost to a certainty, fail to obey such a faint and indirect indication, if at all excited—for instance, by the music of the hounds in the hunting-field—from the simple reason that he is not afraid, like the well-trained charger, to go boldly up to his bit. By saying this, I trust I shall not offend any of my cavalry readers, for such is not my intention. As an old Field Gunner I know how admirably military equitation is taught in the mounted branches of our Service, so I hope I shall hurt no one's feelings, if I say that a horse would be useless in the ranks, if he were to go up to his bit in the manner desirable in the thoroughbred hunter or chaser.

The rider should, as a rule, and as I have elsewhere advised, always keep both hands on the reins, for their combined aid may, at any time, be needed, especially when crossing a country.

To start from the halt.—As the horse has a longer rein when standing, than when walking, or going at any other faster pace, the rider should draw up the reins and close the legs, so as to send the horse up to his bridle. He may make him go on by touching him with his heels, or by speaking to him.

To trot.—To make the horse trot, the rider should

lower his hands, keep a somewhat dead (forgive me the word !) pull on the horse's mouth, close the legs, and may indicate, by slightly rising in his stirrups, his wishes to his animal. The feet may be placed in the stirrup irons only as far as the ball of the foot, so as to ease, by the play of the ankle joints, the up-and-down action of rising in the stirrups. When the horse is not pulling, the body ought to be inclined slightly forwards, as in Plate I., page 22, which, however, is an illustration of the seat at a half-speed gallop. The harder the horse pulls, the more should the rider lean his shoulders back. I do not know what word to substitute for the objectionable one of "dead pull," for although the expression may jar on the horseman's ear, still, not one trotter in fifty will go fast, and maintain an even, level gait, if the rider keeps a light give-and-take feeling on the reins. The majority of fast trotters are very hard pullers: some of them will slacken speed the moment the rider stops pulling against them. The knack (an easy one) of rising in the stirrups can be learned only by practice. One should endeavour to time the rise and fall of the body accurately with the movements of the horse's fore legs. The up-and-down motion of the rider should be only just sufficient to relieve the action of the horse, and should

be performed in an easy, graceful manner. The non-military rider should always rise in his stirrups at the trot, as it is fatiguing both to the horse and to himself, as well as un-English, to bump up and down.

To canter.—The best way to make the horse strike off into a canter, is for the rider to feel his mouth lightly, with his hands somewhat raised, close his legs, sit down in the saddle, lean a little back, and make the horse go forward. Although it is immaterial, from a horseman's point of view, which fore leg a horse leads with, still many (absurdly, I venture to think) consider it fashionable for him to do so only with the off fore. This is quite right, when the horse has to carry a delicate lady who does not want to be shaken, though it ought to be a matter of indifference to a "workman," unless the horse is about to turn, or is cantering in a circle to the left. In the riding school, we are taught to make a horse strike off into a canter with the off fore leading, by having a "double feeling" on the off rein (the inward rein, supposing him to be cantering "circle right") and by a strong pressure of the left or outward leg. He would then have his head turned to the right, while his hind quarters would be prevented by the pressure of the leg, from swinging round to the left. My own personal

experience of the "school," for some years, was that the stronger feeling should be on the near rein, and that the horse will more readily lead with the leg whose shoulder is advanced, than with the other, the action of whose shoulder must be slightly impeded by the neck being turned towards it. I find that the easiest way to make a horse change his leg when cantering with the near fore leading, is to close the right leg, make a half turn and halt to the left, and then strike off in the original direction. I am only advocating what appears to me to be the easiest and most natural plan for ordinary riding. Horses, as a rule, have such a strong desire to carry out their rider's wishes, that the fact of their learning to obey wrong indications, is no argument that such "aids" are right.

The canter, as I have explained on page 20, is a pace of three time, while the gallop is one of four.

To gallop.—The seat at the gallop has been described on page 21.

To pull up.—The horse should be pulled up gradually, so that the suspensory ligaments of his fore legs may not be jarred. With this object, the feet should be drawn well back, and the weight of the body inclined to the rear. If the feet be inclined forward, the resistance

to the weight of the rider being, consequently, borne by the stirrup irons, an undue amount of strain will fall on the fore legs. Need I, when advocating consideration to the horse, direct my readers' attention to the old adages which teach that one horse can wear out four sets of extremities, and that he is as old as his legs ?

To turn the horse.—Catch a good hold of the horse's head, and close the legs, so as to make him go up to his bridle. At the moment of turning, pull the inward rein (the left if he has to go to the left, and *vice versa*) stronger than the outward, draw back the outward leg, and press it hard against the horse's side, and lean the body a little towards the side to which the turn is being made. The pull on the inward rein should be steady, and without any jerk or snatch. The object of collecting the horse and pressing the outward leg to his side, is to make him turn, as much as possible, on his hind legs, instead of on his fore, which are much more liable to be sprained than the former. Besides this, if a horse be allowed to turn on his fore legs, he will be very liable to cross them, and come down. On account of the rider's weight being borne more by the fore, than by the hind extremities, the natural balance of the animal's frame is disturbed for turning by the fact of a

man being on his back ; hence, the rider should endeavour to restore it, as much as he can, for the moment. A horse can hardly make a mistake from turning too much on his hind legs, while nothing is easier than for him to get a bad fall, if he be allowed to turn sharply when going in an uncollected manner.

To rein back.—On this subject I have nothing to add to the instructions contained in the drill book, which direct the rider to have a “double feeling” on both reins, close the legs, and when the horse yields to the pressure, and takes a pace back, ease the reins and legs. Then take another pull, and so on. This practice is an admirable one for teaching the horse to collect himself.

Holding a puller.—The rider should “drop his hands to his horse” when he gets his head up. He should then wait till he lowers it before taking a pull. If the horse will not yield, he should sit well down in the saddle, stick his knees into the flaps, draw the feet back, bend the head and shoulders slightly forward, catch the reins rather short, take a pull, feeling his knees grip still tighter, and himself jammed still firmer into the saddle, the harder the horse pulls. If he finds that this does not succeed, he should let the horse have his head again, drop his hands, and wait till he finds that the animal

stops bearing on the bit, and that his mouth yields somewhat ; he ought then to take another pull, and speak to him the while. He may *saw* the bit, if he finds that the horse has it between his teeth. Knotting the reins short will give the rider a very firm hold on them.

Many bad riders, when on a puller, thrust their feet forward, hump their shoulders, stick their elbows out, and jam their fists against their waistcoat ; while others keep their arms straight and throw their whole weight on the stirrups.

If a man is riding with a double-reined bridle, he may, as advised by Colonel Hardy in 'Our Horses,' knot one rein short, and then draw it back on the horse's neck, so that it may catch and prevent him from getting his head down or extending it ; the animal will then be pulling mainly against his own neck, and not against his rider's hands.

As regards *the bridling of a puller*, I may remark that, if a double bridle be used, the curb should be put low down in the mouth (see page 230). If it be still found to be inefficient, its reins should be dropped, and the effect of the snaffle alone be tried. A Chisney bit ; running reins, either the ordinary kind, or those attached like a martingale (see page 242) ; or any kind of bit, and a

standing martingale, may be used, due regard being paid to the nature of the work the horse is called upon to do.

Going up and down hill.—If the ascent be steep, catch hold of the mane with one hand, lean well forward, grip the saddle tightly with the knees, avoid putting any weight on the stirrups, for doing so would be very apt to cause the saddle to shift its position backwards, and leave the reins perfectly loose. The horse may be allowed to take a zigzag course. When going down a steep hill, take a good hold of the horse's head, so as to make him get his hind quarters under him, grip tightly with the legs, draw the feet back, lean as far back as possible, and let the horse go straight down, and not obliquely. If he happens to slip when proceeding in the former manner, he will, in all probability, merely let himself down on his hind quarters; while if in the latter, he may fall on his side and roll over.

Swimming the horse. — Take the feet out of the stirrups, leave the reins slack, and hold on by the mane. Or, get off the saddle, and hold on by the pommel or by the mane with one hand, while with the other one try to guide the horse to one side by lightly touching the reins, and to the other side by splashing him with water. Or, hold on to the tail.

**Riding and bridling Horses which have
Tricks or Vices.**

The art of making horses which come under the above category, conform to the wishes of their rider, who of course ought to be a good horseman, is mainly dependent on the fact of his possessing "nerve," "temper," patience and firmness. It frequently happens that a man who in his youth "could have done anything" he pleased with a horse, begins to lose his wonderful power the moment his nerve commences to "go." A hesitating manner in approaching, a trembling about the knees, or a nervous clutching at the reins when mounted, betrays the rider's secret, often before he is conscious of it himself, to the observant animal, which is only too ready to change his position of servant to that of master. Although our horses should never be allowed to oppose their wills to ours, still we should endeavour to obtain from them friendly obedience, rather than the sullen submission of cowed slaves, for a horse's courage and intelligence are as needful to us as his speed and strength. No one who loses his temper or is timid when in the saddle, deserves the name of a horseman.

There is such infinite variety in the dispositions of

different horses that it would be useless to write, except in general terms, concerning the best methods of correcting the infirmities of temper and tricks to which they are liable.

Boring.—Some horses carry their heads too low down, generally from the effect of the continued use of the curb or Pelham (see page 201), while others bore to one side. With the former, the ordinary or gag snaffle (see page 241) may be tried, or the cheekpieces of the headstall may be taken up (see page 235). With the latter, the ring snaffle (see page 192) may be used ; or the ring of the ordinary snaffle on the side opposite to which the horse bores, may be connected with the throat latch by a strap, so that the mouthpiece may bear on the gum (see page 234). A circle of stiff leather, about 4 inches in diameter, as used by many Hansom cabmen in London, may be placed on the mouthpiece of the ring snaffle on the side to which the animal bores, so that his head may be kept straight by the pressure afforded by the broad leather surface on the side of the mouth. Short tacks are sometimes fixed in the leather circle, so as to hurt the horse's cheek in the event of his boring to his favourite side. A noseband (see page 216) may be employed.

Buck-jumping.—This vice, which is practically unknown in England, is very common among Australian horses, which, I believe, have inherited it from the South American mustangs that were imported into the colony during its early years. I have heard of instances of English, Indian, and even Arab horses “bucking,” but I have never met with a case of the sort in my own experience. The buck-jumper, with the quickness of thought, throws his head down between his fore legs: at the same moment he arches his back, bounds in the air with all four feet close together, either forwards, to one side, to the other, or, at times, even backwards, till he dislodges his rider, breaks the girths, gets through his saddle, or tires himself out. I have had a horse—aptly called Euclid—after throwing me, buck for quite five minutes all round and even over me, in the vain attempt to get rid of his saddle, while I lay prostrate on the ground longing for him to go to some more suitable place in which to show off his antics. If the rider be unaccustomed to buck-jumpers, he will, generally, from the suddenness of the downward movement of the horse’s head, he pulled more or less forward on to his neck. The convulsive cant given by the animal’s loins will shift the man still more forward, while a few

repetitions of the same action will complete the removal. I can say from experience that when a horse bucks, the rider becomes suddenly aware that there is nothing in front of the pommel of the saddle except a sheer precipice, while he feels himself chucked forward from behind. Some buck-jumpers are perfectly quiet to mount, but the moment they feel the rider's weight in the saddle, they will try all they know to throw him off. Others will not buck unless they are very fresh, or when under some unusual excitement. An Australian steeplechase mare, with which I won several races, always bucked with me—but never at other times—if I happened, when riding her, to take a paper of any sort in my hand ; the instant she heard the crackling sound it made, down went her head, and, if I did not come off, I generally had a very near escape of doing so. I believe I am correct in saying that, as a rule, there is no vice which the horse, if mastered a few times, forgets so readily as buck-jumping. Many Australians ride these horses to perfection, though few men who have not learned during their youth to do so in the colonies, ever acquire the knack.

To break a horse of bucking, the best plan, if the rider be not an adept in the art, is for him to take the

horse, after longeing him well, to some heavy, swampy, or deep ground, and mount him there, so that he may have as little purchase as possible for his feet. He may fix the reins as directed on page 235. A gag snaffle is the best general bit with which to ride a buck-jumper, as he cannot buck if his head be kept up, though the one fatal mistake inexperienced riders make, is to hang on to the reins; for in doing so they will almost inevitably be pulled on to the horse's neck, from whence they will have but a remote chance of getting back into the saddle. A sharp pull on the gag reins, if made in time, may possibly stop the horse throwing his head down. In all cases the rider should sit and lean as far back as he can, and let the reins slip through his hands if the horse succeeds in lowering his head, for unless the animal is able to bear on the reins, he cannot, as a rule, buck with his wonted viciousness; at least, he will not appear to the rider to be able to do so. After he has bucked a few times, the man, if he feels secure in his seat, may pull him round from one side to the other, so as to counteract his tricks. Or he may pull him round, if he can do so in time, the moment he feels him arching his back preparatory to bucking.

Colonel Hardy, in his interesting book, 'Our Horses,'

suggests that the best way to tackle a known buck-jumper is to "put into his mouth, in addition to your riding bit, a very fine racing snaffle with its rein (which should of course be a strong one) knotted short to his neck; the slack end to be held in hand. The horse would not feel this to annoy him in any way unless he tried getting his head down, in which case it would effectually stop his little game, and he would find himself baffled: he would have his own neck to pull against, instead of the rider's hands." I have mentioned this plan as a preventive measure against pulling on page 41.

Chuck up the head.—Be careful that the curb-chain, if a curb bit be used, does not hurt the sharp edges of the branches of the lower jaw (see page 200), and put the mouthpiece low down in the mouth; or try a large smooth snaffle instead. Try a running or standing martingale (see page 234).

Difficult to mount.—This vice is usually caused by the impatience of the horse to go on. When this is the case, the rider, after getting into the saddle, may accustom the horse to remain where he is, for five or six minutes without advancing, and should speak soothingly to him. He may then get off again and repeat the performance

a few times. If the owner be an indifferent horseman he should get a skilful rider to do the breaking. Hacking a horse quietly about, and getting off and mounting again at different places will generally make him quiet to mount. I may say in passing, that when a young horse is being broken, it is unadvisable to make him start off the moment one is in the saddle. He should, on the contrary, be taught that the pressure of the rider's legs and the shortening of the reins, are the signals for him to go on, and not the act of mounting.

Forging.—When a horse “forges” (makes a noise at the trot by striking one foot against another), he does so by hitting the front part of the web of one fore shoe with the toe of the shoe of its hind foot, by reason of the fore feet not being “picked up” quickly enough. The remedy is to make a horse go up to his bridle, and get his hind legs under him, in other words to collect himself more than he is accustomed to do. A curb may be substituted for the snaffle. If the shoeing be faulty, the feet may be lowered, and their slope (about 50° for the fore feet and 55° for the hind) corrected. The use of too heavy shoes, weakness, or the awkwardness of youth, may cause this unpleasant habit.

Kicking.—Keep the horse's head raised, speak to him,

and "shake him up." If a horse kicks, see that the saddle or girths do not pinch him.

Rearing.—Bend well over the horse's neck, lower the hands, and pull him round to one side or to the other. A bad rider, when doing this, may have to hold on to the mane by one hand. He should grip tightly with the knees, for if the horse rears high, while he is bearing his weight on the stirrups, the leathers may come out of the spring bars, which may cause him to slip down to the ground over the horse's croup. Hitting the horse between the ears is a barbarous practice, which is apt to make the horse "come down" and break his knees, may injure his poll, and is almost certain to make him "shy" of the whip for the rest of his life. A lady, however, if on a bad rearer, may be well excused for hitting him between the ears, for it is impossible for her to bend over the horse's neck to the extent to which a man can. "Harry Hieover" observes that "to sit him when he does rear, lean quite forward, give him all his head, and just before his feet reach the ground clap both spurs to him and hit him under the flank with a jockey-whip or good tough bit of ash plant. He cannot rise again till his feet reach the ground; he may plunge forward, but if he does, it matters little. Serve him so

whenever he rears. But as you value your life, neither touch him with the whip, spur, or bit, while he is up and rising ; for being made angry, he will rise higher on being touched by either, than he otherwise would have done, and possibly high enough to fall over, or at least sideways."

The standing martingale (see page 219), either attached to the rings of the snaffle or to a noseband (see page 217), may be employed to prevent rearing.

Restiveness.—The vice of restiveness, or that of obstinately refusing to go on, has received no generally accepted designation, although it is a most unpleasant and not very uncommon trick. I have heard it called "propping," "kegging," etc. In common parlance, a restive horse is one which is fidgety and unsteady ; in fact, one which will not remain standing in the same place, although the very opposite to this is the correct meaning. As passive resistance is more difficult to overcome than active opposition, the exhibition of this vice will try the rider's temper and baffle his powers of persuasion and coercion more than the whole list of equine tricks put together, except, perhaps, the unpleasant habit some animals contract of prancing, dancing about, and refusing to walk quietly when

mounted. If the rider tries to urge on a restive animal, he will probably back, kick, shoulder his man up against a tree, wall, or other convenient rubbing-post, bite him if within reach, rear straight on end, or even, as I have known one do, throw himself down and roll. A friend of mine, who is one of the most brilliant cross-country riders I have ever met, was once riding a horse of this description. They got on all right together, until they came to a small watercourse, at which the horse stopped and refused to proceed. My friend, who was holding the reins loosely in his right hand, shook them on the animal's neck as a hint to go on. In an instant the brute whipped his head round, seized his rider's wrist with his teeth, and dragged him off his back. The poor fellow battled with the horse for several minutes, and dealt him blow after blow about the muzzle and face with his left hand ; but the horse kept shaking him like a terrier would a rat, until at last, when he let him go, my friend's wrist was a mass of pulp, and had, of course, to be amputated. I am glad to add that this terrible accident did not shake the iron nerves of the sufferer—Mr. "Bertie" Short—and that he subsequently won many steeplechases in India, though he had to use a hook. He rides now with double reins, which are

sewn together at intervals, so as to form loops of about four or five inches long. He is thus able to shorten or lengthen his hold, or can take both reins in his right, and use the whip in his left hand.

Resolute riding will, as a rule, overcome this vice when it is not very strongly developed, while Rarey-fying will generally succeed for the time. I have always found that if "shaking the horse up," and giving him a cut or two of the whip and a few digs of the spurs fail, that I could tire him out and disgust him with remaining where he is, by pulling him round and round to one side, and then to the other, sooner than by any other means. Reining him back might also be tried. I have read of an old gentleman, who, when his horse stopped and refused to go on, took a newspaper out of his pocket, calmly commenced to read it from the beginning, and though the animal, after a while, wanted to proceed, he kept him where he was, until he had completed the perusal of his journal. The story goes on to say that the horse in question never tried the trick again. I happened once to cure a recent purchase of mine, for the time being, of this vice, by getting off and giving him a severe "hiding" with a thick stick, while a friend of mine held him. I was not pleased with myself for

this rather unhorsemanlike proceeding done in a moment of passion, and sold him soon after. I may say, in passing, that a moderately thick ash plant, or stick, is much more efficacious with a restive horse than is a cutting whip. I knew a case of an officer who bought for a "song," a sound, handsome horse, which was "cast" out of the Artillery for incurable restiveness. The owner put him into a cart to commence with, but instead of going on, he backed until he forced the trap up against a wall. Having arrived there, the officer got out and picketed him. When feeding-time came round, he had the animal's bucket of water and corn brought and placed just out of his reach, and kept him in that tantalising position for about thirty hours. He then undid the picketting ropes, got into the cart, and drove the horse, which was glad to be off, five miles out and the same distance back, and had him watered and fed on his return. The animal never showed any signs of restiveness again, and turned out a valuable purchase.

Running away.—I have nothing to add to the remarks I made on pages 40 and 41, regarding the holding of a puller, except to say that, however much satisfaction a man, with his own spurs on a borrowed horse, may have in allowing him to run away, and even in urging him on

when he begins to show signs of having had "enough," still, no horseman, worthy of the name, would wilfully incur the risk of breaking an animal down, rather than exhaust every effort in trying what fine hands and patient riding can effect. I believe horses have been known to run away (I don't mean breaking away for a few hundred yards) with some of our best riders, although I have never seen an animal which was properly bitted do so with a really good and strong horseman, who was, at the time, in fair training. We may take for granted, except in extremely exceptional cases, that when a horse runs away, he is wrongly bitted, or the rider has no "hands," is weak, or is "out of condition."

Shying and unsteadiness.—A horseman ought to be above minding small eccentricities of manner in his mount, and should take in good part a playful shy or kick, a slight rear or light-hearted bound or two, though he should never tolerate direct opposition to his wishes. When horses are "fresh," especially when they have just come out of a warm stable into the cold, crisp morning air, they will dance about, and "lark" on little or no provocation, although on their return home after a hard day's work they may be steady enough for the most timid old gentleman. As shying, when uncombined

with restiveness, arises from defective vision, high spirits, or fear, the rider should not attempt to counteract it by punishment, beyond a chiding word, or a slight touch of the spurs, just to indicate his wishes. He may, however, take a good hold of the reins, and press him well up to the bit with his legs. It is only reasonable, as "Harry Hieover" remarks, to turn the horse's head away from the object at which he shies, so that it may no longer affect him. Partial cataract, and shortsightedness, which is frequently present with that prominent appearance of the eye called among horsemen "buck eyes," are not uncommon causes of shying. In the vast majority of cases, however, the two faults we are considering are the results of unskillful riding on previous occasions. A generous, high-spirited horse starts at a bird flying across the road, or at hearing the report of a gun, as any nervous person might do, or pricks his ears on seeing some unusual object. The man on his back thereupon snatches at the reins, "jobs" him with the spurs, hits him with the whip, and yells out, "Do you think I stole you?" or some other choice expression which he has the authority of his groom for considering to be *en règle*. An animal thus treated will naturally—for a horse never forgets—connect in his own mind the

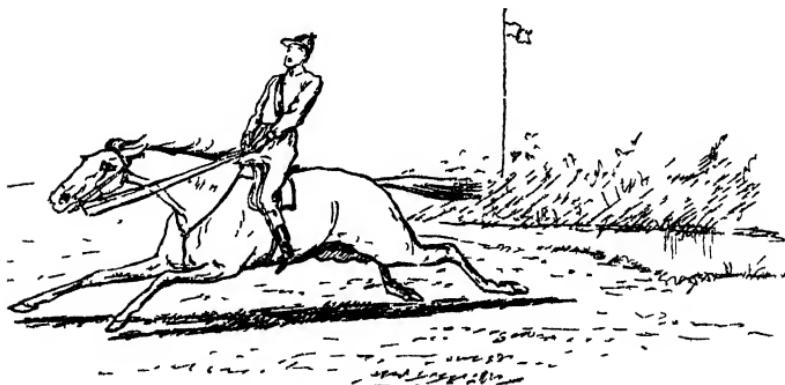
idea of punishment with anything, which before might have excited but his passing interest, and will become more or less unmanageable from fear of his barbarous rider. Or, a timid person on horseback, on seeing some object or expecting to hear some noise which he may think will alarm the horse, may clutch at the reins, and try, in anticipation, to reassure his courage by saying "Steady, lad," "Whow-ho, boy." By acting thus, he will make the horse believe that something very dreadful is going to happen, and will cause him to be thoroughly on the *qui vive* against danger. When he is worked up into this state by his rider, he will of course be only too ready to express his fear in a form which will probably be very disagreeable to the man in the saddle. I recollect one morning, when I was in the Bengal Staff Corps, finding that I could not ride my charger, as there was something wrong with him, and as I had a very good-looking selling plater which was well up to weight, I thought it would be rather fun trying him at the brigade parade, to which I had to go with my regiment. He did not quite like the look of the sepoys at first, but calmed down very soon. The order was given to fire a *feu de joie*, which, I may tell my non-military readers, tries a horse's steadiness more than

any other noise in existence. I saw the other officers drawing up their reins and going through the usual formula, while their chargers were prepared to display their accustomed amount of emotion. As I knew that my horse had never heard a *feu de joie*, I tried the experiment of sitting still and leaving the reins slack. At the word of command, the rattle of musketry came down the front rank, and then up the rear rank, causing other horses, which had been chargers for years, to whisk round, and almost to, metaphorically, "jump out of their skins," but neither the old selling plater or myself took the slightest notice of the row. So surprised was I at his tranquillity that I thought he was deaf, until I had to go out to "take up a point," for on going a few yards, I spoke to him, and he "went into his bridle" in a moment, thus showing that he minded an indication from me infinitely more than one from outside.

Stumbling.—There are two kinds of stumblers. The one lifts his foot, at the walk, without throwing his weight too much forward at the same time, but he does not bend his knee enough, or unduly depresses his toe, when putting the foot to the ground. If, at the conclusion of the step, there be an inequality in the ground,

he will, in all probability, strike it, and stumble ; but, except in very rare cases, he will not fall, for the misadventure will not be enough to disturb the equilibrium of his body. The rider, if he be not very nervous, may well disregard this fault, unless it belongs to an animal intended for show rather than for use. Many horses which have low and good galloping action trip or " toe " when walking. The other and dangerous kind of stumbler has generally straight shoulders, infirm fore legs, or cramped action. As he leans his weight too much forward, he is very liable to catch the ground with the toe of his advancing fore leg, a fall being the probable result, from the centre of gravity of the body being well beyond the point of support of the fore legs. If, added to the imperfect manner in which the body is balanced, the animal be infirm in front, he will have but a remote chance of recovering himself, in the event of a bad trip. All that the rider can do to prevent such a catastrophe is to ride the horse well up to his bridle, so that he may get his hind legs under him. A properly adjusted curb bit may be substituted for the snaffle. The rider should on no account punish the horse for stumbling, for that would have the effect only of making him start and prance about after the mistake has occurred, but will not

make him go more "collectedly" before it takes place. Besides this, the habit of throwing up the head and dancing about after a stumble is quite as disagreeable, though not as dangerous, a trick as the fault itself. As much may be done to prevent stumbling by a little attention to shoeing, it may not be out of place, if I advise the same precautions as to slope of the hoof, etc., which I have detailed on page 49. The trick of "knuckling over behind," which is a stumble with one of the hind feet, can generally be cured by lowering the foot, if it be too long, and reducing it under the toe, so as to get the slope of the hoof at an angle of about 55° . Weakness, the awkwardness common among young horses, and the practice of wearing too heavy shoes, often induce stumbling.



CHAPTER II.

RIDING OVER FENCES.

Jumping—Riding Refusers.

As it is essential for safety and comfort, when crossing a country, that the horse should take his fences in a steady, business-like manner, the rider ought to try to avoid betraying any unusual eagerness or anxiety, beyond showing, by a firm pressure of the legs, and a good hold of the horse's head, that he means the animal to go straight, when approaching an obstacle. He should eschew the vicious habit of shifting about in his seat, and of working with the reins, or "niggling" at the horse's mouth, as we sometimes call it in Ireland. I may say that the art of riding well, over a country, chiefly consists in making as little as possible of the jumps, and that the fact of the rider treating fences and level ground with equal indifference, will inspire his horse with confidence to take things in the

same spirit. On a strange horse, or on one of which we have any doubt, we might restrain his pace a bit, or send him along with an encouraging word. But we should never, unless on a peculiar horse, or in a peculiar country, pull him up, when we come to a fence, in order that he may take it according to any arbitrary ideas of our own ; neither should we frighten him half out of his life by whip, spur, or voice, to show to the spectators how brave we are, or to harden our own hearts. In order to be one with a horse, we should endeavour to get him to take his fences in the same manner as we would do ourselves, were we on foot, and were we possessed with the requisite activity. As horses are very prone to take liberties—perhaps because, as Whyte-Melville says, they don't like jumping—the rider should show his mount that his one object is to go straight. If, however, when going up to a fence, the horseman sees proper cause for pulling up, or turning his animal off it, he should do so with the very clearest “indications” with leg and rein, so that the horse may not make the mistake of thinking that he is allowed to refuse. I may say, in passing, that I have ridden a few horses who were passionately fond of jumping, and who would have taken a lot of stopping to have made them turn away from a fence at

which they were once put. When hunting in a cramped country, it is especially necessary to ride in such a manner as to show the horse that he has to go where one wants, and that he is not required to jump every fence which comes in sight. In steeplechasing, on the contrary, the horse should have the necessity impressed upon him of clearing every obstacle which he is turned at, with quickness and precision. The value of the hunter greatly depends on his possessing the necessary intelligence for understanding his master's wishes. Need I say how requisite it is for the rider to have decision of character? Riding in a flying country is, of course, more or less like chasing, in which the possession of the faculties for galloping, staying, and jumping makes the perfect horse. As every rider who steers his own horse, has a right to study his own convenience as to whether his animal should go fast or slow at his fences, I have nothing to remark on this subject beyond saying, that if a horse requires to be steadied at a jump, the pull ought not be taken nearer, as a rule, than thirty or forty yards away from it, and that the horse, for that distance, ought to be allowed to make his own pace up to it, always supposing that the rider has a steady feeling on his horse's mouth, and that he never leaves

the reins loose. As horses vary so much, it would be useless for me to lay down any rules about steadyng them, or riding them at their fences, except in the most general terms. Clever jumpers, as a rule, fence best when the rider lets them have their head, and make their effort without either rousing or restraining. Many horses, however, are so shifty and uncertain that they need all the assistance they can get. Those of us who have gone in for pedestrianism, must have sometimes felt, when running up to a jump, that the steps we were taking would not give us the proper take off, and that it was necessary for us, in order to obtain it, to lengthen or shorten our stride. We may experience the same feeling when riding a horse up to a fence; while, if we have had sufficient practice, and are possessed of the requisite "nerve," we may find that we instinctively make him extend or "collect" himself, so that he may take off correctly.

When the horse is going freely at a fence, the rider should sit well down in the saddle, and should have both hands on the reins, so as to prevent a refusal, or to "pull the horse together," if required. He should avoid the trick of raising one hand, as it is not alone "bad form," but it also deprives the rider of its assistance at

the very moment it may be most needed. He should, on no account, catch the cantle of the saddle—unless, perhaps, over a deep drop jump—as doing so is reprehensible on the same account, besides being dangerous in the event of the horse happening to fall, as the rider could not then well get clear, if the animal were to roll over. He should lean back and draw his feet back (see the *Frontispiece*). If his feet be thrust forward when the horse lands on the other side, the resulting jerk of the feet on the stirrup irons—as the legs will then be necessarily straight—will re-act in the direction of the legs, and as this will be below the centre of gravity of the body, it will have a strong tendency to tilt the rider over. Although a weak-seated man is, sometimes, “jumped out of his saddle” by a very “flippant” fencer, bad riders, in nine falls out of ten, tumble off at the moment of landing. If, when a horse lands over a fence, the rider has his feet drawn back, the jerk caused by the horse coming on the ground, will be borne by the rider’s thighs, which will “give to,” and nullify, as much as possible, the disturbing effect of the shock. From the moment the horse goes at a fence, till he lands and “gets away” from it, the rider should maintain exactly the same seat, with reference to the vertical position of

his body. I make this remark merely in passing, as I am well aware that nothing but long practice will enable the rider to acquire the necessary power of balance to do so. However, the better he understands what he ought to learn, the quicker will he profit by practical instruction on horseback. As long as a man keeps his feet and legs in proper position, I cannot see how he can lean too far back on landing over a fence. Besides obtaining safety for himself, he will, by leaning back, reduce, very considerably, the jar on the horse's fore legs. Leaning back, however, is of no use, unless the rider draws his feet back at the same time.

When a horse goes up to a fence prepared to jump in proper form, his hind quarters will be well under him, and his loins will be slightly arched, ready to make their effort. When he thus "collects" himself, he will draw in his head and neck a little, so that the position of the spinal column may assist the action of the limbs. When the horse, on the contrary, lands,—unless he comes down on all fours like a stag over a paling, as some Irish horses do over a wall,—the head and neck will be more or less fully extended. Hence, a man, when going at a fence, should ride with a long rein, so that he may not run the risk of interfering

with the horse's mouth when he lands, or of being pulled over on to the animal's neck. The hands, one on each rein, and well separated, should be held little if anything, beyond the pommel.

From nervousness, or from some insane idea of "lifting" a horse, some riders contract the habit of jerking up their hands just as the horse is making his spring. By doing this, the rider tends to make his horse throw up his head, and thus to check the free action of his hind quarters, at the very moment their assistance is most needed. He should, on the contrary, keep his hands low down so that the horse may be induced to bend his neck, and carry his head in the best position for conforming to the action of the hind quarters. The remarks I have made on page 185 concerning this subject apply specially to jumping.

When the rider can take his own time over jumps, the old axiom of riding a horse slow over timber, i.e. any high obstacle, and fast at water, i.e. any broad place, holds good (see page 133). At steeplechasing, however, a great deal has to be left to the honour of the horse, while the jockey does his part by sitting still, and keeping a good hold of his animal's head. When I write about going slow at height, I mean that it should

be done at a good steady canter. I am no advocate for crawling or craning.

Over bare post and rails, if the former are not higher than the latter, I would advise the horseman to ride at it in preference to the rail, as the animal can see it so much better, and "take off," so much more accurately before it, than he could do, were he to attempt to jump the other; as, owing to the horizontal position of his eyes, he can judge far more readily the distance of vertical objects, than of horizontal ones which have daylight between them and the ground. If the post and rails are "bushed up," the one can, of course, be seen as well as the other. I am here supposing that the obstacle cannot be chanced with impunity. If the post be higher than the rail, I would adopt Captain Humfrcy's advice, to jump the horse a little to one side of the post.

If the horse happens to come down, and the rider has the good luck to maintain his seat, he should leave the reins perfectly loose so as not to interfere with the animal's efforts. If he be unseated, he should try to roll clear, while keeping a firm hold of the reins as long as he can. Practice undoubtedly enables us to acquire, to some extent, the art of falling softly, though

it is hardly a sufficiently exact science to be treated of theoretically in a book.

Riding Refusers.

Horses generally refuse an obstacle because they are afraid of it; are sulky; have got into the habit from being allowed or forced to "run out" by incompetent or timid riders, or because they fear hurting themselves when taking off or landing. In all cases, the rider should sit well down in the saddle, and catch a good hold of the animal's head, with the reins well separated, and both hands on them. An encouraging word and firm pressure of the legs will stimulate the horse's courage, while a touch of the spurs may be advisable. If the horse refuses to one particular side, the rider may hold the whip in that hand and "show" it to him. Some rogues are amenable to severe discipline, and will jump if they get a cut of the whip, and a sharp dig or two of the spurs; though others, on the contrary, will decline the invitation, if the horseman even "feels" the reins, or brushes their sides with his unarmed heels. One of the worst falls I have ever had, was when riding a steeplechase on a very uncertain tempered horse, whose owner, a professional jockey, had failed, a few

days before, to make him fence. We had only a small field opposed to us, and, as I did not move on him, we agreed fairly together for a while. 'At the end of the first half of the journey I was leading by several lengths and thought the race was as good as won, until we arrived at the eighth or ninth fence, which was a 4ft. 3in. wall that could not be "chanced." I suppose the fact of my not liking the look of the barrier made me hustle my mount, for I rammed the spurs in just as he was going to make his effort, as I instinctively felt that he was taking off very far away from the wall, and that he would require an unusually strong impulse to clear it. The moment I touched him I felt him try to stop, but his evil intention was formed too late, so all he could do was to breast the masonry. In another instant he was stretched on his back on the landing side, the saddle smashed, and I crumpled up.

When a horse refuses on account of being afraid to propel himself, the mischief generally lies in the hocks; but when his dislike to jumping arises from his dread of painful concussion on landing, splints, fever in the feet, corns, navicular disease, or injured ligament or tendon will most frequently be to blame. I may remark, in passing, that it is not very uncommon to find slight

cases of laminitis or navicular disease among hunters, and even among successful steeplechase horses. I have known two or three cases of horses which were previously fine, bold fencers, becoming refusers from having over-reached on their back tendons. The harder the ground, the more will any form of unsoundness affect the animal's jumping capabilities. I remember a sad case of a most promising steeplechase rider being killed by his horse falling on him over a small fence, simply because the landing was hard, and the animal had bad corns.

Although the subject of breaking does not come within the scope of this work, still, as most of us, when we ride a horse, want him again on some future day, a few remarks on the best method for correcting this vice may not be out of place here. We frequently see the rider of a horse which happens to refuse a fence, take him again and again at it while vigorously plying whip and spur. Each time the animal baulks, he does so with stronger determination than ever not to jump the obstacle. Horses have such retentive memories, and such obstinate wills, when their tempers are fully roused, that a lesson or two of the sort I have described often ruins a horse for life. I recall an instance of a bold and

accomplished steeplechase rider trying a horse he was to ride, in two or three days, over the course which was to be "flagged out" for them. After negotiating a few fences cleverly, the horse, whether from jumping in "cold blood," or from some reason of his own, baulked at a small bank with a ditch in front of it. The rider lost his temper, probably on account of the presence of a few friends who had come to admire, and used whip and spur when bringing him round, but he refused again and would have nothing to say to the fence, although his rider "cut him almost to ribbons." I need hardly say that when the race came off, this horse refused at the very same place and would go no further. I cannot too strongly impress on my readers that a man should never be drawn into a pitched battle with his mount unless he is all but certain of victory. It is no matter how strong and good a rider a man may be, he cannot, when on his back, force him to jump a fence which the animal has made up his mind to refuse. Many men have an insane idea, if a horse baulks with them, that they are bound to "have it out" with him and to fight him to the bitter end, as if the refusal were a personal challenge on the part of the horse, and that, if they do not punish him severely for the supposed insult, their

reputation for courage would suffer. The contest is such a one-sided affair that none but a coward would accept it. Were the horse free to kick and bite the man, as he is at liberty to flog and spur his animal, there might be some merit in the rider's exhibition of cruelty. The moment we find that punishment does not succeed, we should resort to some other means for accomplishing our object, for the more we punish, the worse will the effect of the horse's ultimate victory be on him.

However senseless it may be for a man to fight his own horse for the unworthy object of gratifying resentment and "showing off," the action is trebly unjustifiable when the horse belongs to someone else, especially when the rider is a hired servant. We pay our jockeys to win races, our grooms to exercise and school our hunters in the best possible manner, and not to afford them an opportunity of displaying their bravery at the expense of our four-legged property. Nothing is more apt to disgust a horse with jumping than the practice of "larking" him several times over the same obstacle. If a horse which one is training, determinedly baulks at a fence two or three times, the best plan to break him of the vice, is, if one has the means at hand, to get off, put a stout halter or cavasson

on his head, attach to it a couple of strong leading reins or ropes, and give each of them to a couple of men to hold, and to pull the horse, whether he likes it or not, over the fence ; while another man from behind hastens his journey with a whip, to crack though not to punish, beyond a few light touches. Once over, the horse should be mounted and ridden on. I have heard it said, that the steeplechase horse Congress was cured, in this manner, of refusing. We have here the principle, so well exemplified by Rarey, of overcoming opposition by painless though irresistible force. When the animal finds that he has to "give in," and is not ill-treated, he almost always submits with a good grace.

An excellent and safe way for teaching horses to jump, whether they are inclined to refuse or not, is to make a circular course of not less than five yards broad and about 150 yards in length, and enclose it with high palings, while four or five fences of different kinds—say, a hurdle topped with brushwood, an Irish bank, a stone wall, a water jump, and a post and rails—may be placed at intervals round it. The horse is then turned loose into this kind of circus, either with or without a leader, and is made to jump with a little persuasion.

Some horses which are inclined to refuse at particular

kinds of fences, do not actually do so when ridden in a determined manner, though they may jump short or bungle in one way or the other. A steeplechase mare which I afterwards bought, and which was the animal whose tricks I described on page 46, had, during the early part of her career, a strong objection to water. The moment she saw it in front of her, she used to "dig her toes into the ground," and try to stop or "run out;" while if she was ridden resolutely, she would simply jump into the centre of it, and she would then scramble out, as she was far too clever to "come down." To cure her of this trick, her owner, a brilliant horseman and fine judge of racing, constructed, on a small private course of his own, a deep water jump, at the bottom of which he laid down bundles of thorny bushes and weighted them till they were nearly flush with the surface of the water. That done, he mounted the mare and took her at the artificial brook as fast as he could send her along. She tried her best to stop, and then jumped as usual straight into the middle of it, out of which she bounded twice as quick as she had leaped into it. For a full week after that, her owner and groom were occupied in picking the sharp thorns out of her belly and legs; but the lesson had its effect, as she

never jumped short again at any brook "between the flags." When the steeplechase for which she was being trained came off, all, except those who were in the secret, were surprised to see the whilom refuser at water clear the brook on the course by a good ten feet.





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CHAPTER III.

RACE RIDING.

Standing in the Stirrups—Manner of Holding the Reins—How to Handle the Reins—Starting—The different Ways of Riding a Race—Judging Pace—Waiting—Making the Running—Waiting in Front—Keeping with one's Horses—General remarks on Race Riding—The Seat when Finishing—Remarks on Finishing—On Riding “Rogues”—On Riding Pullers—Orders—On the Use of Spurs during a Race—On the Use of the Whip—Effect of Punishment on Horses.

IF a horse were a mere machine, the jockey's business would be the delightfully simple one of regulating his speed, so that he might gallop over the appointed course in the shortest possible space of time. Horses, however, will not bear being treated in this mechanical manner: they have peculiarities common to their species, as well as racing points, infirmities and tempers of their own, all of which should be taken advantage of, studied and humoured by the rider who strives to be the first to catch the judge's eye. As race riding, then, is not an exact science to which cut-and-dried rules are applicable,

I must content myself, in this chapter, with noting down a few hints and practical remarks, which I trust the novice will find useful.

Standing in the Stirrups.—At starting, the jockey of course sits down in the saddle, but as soon as the horse has got into his stride, he should “stand in the stirrups.” This attitude is assumed in order to enable the rider to conform to the movements of the horse in the best possible manner, as will be explained on page 185. The body should be slightly bent forward, and should be free from all stiffness. The seat should be somewhat raised from the saddle, not stuck out over the cantle, without any up-and-down motion. The knee should be very little bent, in fact only sufficient to give the joint some “play.” The heels should be a trifle depressed, while the feet should be kept parallel to the sides of the horse, and should be placed well “home” in the stirrups. The legs and feet should be kept perfectly steady. The head should be held well up, the eyes looking straight between the horse’s ears, the shoulders down, the elbows nearly straight, and the hands on each side of the withers, with a good firm hold on the reins, so that the horse may go well up to his bridle. The fingers, wrists, elbows and shoulders should be kept as loose and pliable

as possible. As Tom Cannon kindly pointed out to me, the position should be such that the points of the shoulder, knee and toe should be very nearly in the same vertical line ; the whole attitude should be characterised by grace and ease, like that of the celebrated jockey in the accompanying drawing. The balance should be so preserved by the grip of the legs, the pressure of the feet on the stirrups, and the hold the rider has on the reins, that the weight may be carried smoothly forward at each stride, and that there may not be the slightest jolting, or up-and-down movement. By riding thus, the horse's muscles that are used in galloping will be enabled to act to the greatest advantage. The balance should be true and well maintained, so that, in the event of a stumble, swerve, or any unexpected movement, the horseman may be ready to throw his shoulders back, grip the saddle with his knees, and "catch the horse by the head" in a moment.

The harder he pulls, the tighter should the grip of the knees become, and the more should the rider lean his body back. If the rider, when trying to hold his horse, presses on the stirrups rather than grips with the knees, the stirrups and feet will move forward, while the rider's seat will be carried over the cantle, an attitude

which will throw the weight back towards the loins, and will cause the body to bump up and down, on account of the arms being necessarily rigid. But as the saddle cannot shift in the same manner as the stirrups are liable to do, a firm grip of the legs will enable the hands, arms and body to "give and take" with the movements of the head and neck, as the horse moves forward at each stride. The more the animal pulls, the closer should the elbows be brought to the sides ; while, to gain more power, the knuckles may be turned down, and the palms of the hands up. When standing in the stirrups, the insides of the knees are the parts of the legs which are principally occupied in pressing against the flaps of the saddle.

In five-furlong races, when it is a case of "jumping off with the lead and coming along all the way through," jockeys frequently adopt a seat which is a sort of compromise between standing in the stirrups and finishing. The knees are then more bent, the seat is closer to the saddle, and the hands are kept higher than in the former position, while the feet and body are not drawn back as much as they are in the latter.

Manner of Holding the Reins.—The reins should be held crossed (as described in Chapter I.) in both hands,

while the whip should be kept, lash down, and in the right or left hand, as may be deemed most fit (see p. 119). Almost all good jockeys put a knot at the extreme end of their reins, the knot being made so that its end points down. This is done to prevent the slack of the rein from flying about. I may remark that it is the present fashion to use a single rein on a snaffle, even with a martingale, in preference to double reins. Edwin Martin tells me that our old jockeys, such as Frank Butler, Flatman, Chifney, etc., would not have thought of riding a race without double reins and a martingale, on a snaffle, and that the two reins give one much more command over the horse than the single one. Although I have always been of this opinion, still I would have hardly dared to have criticised the fashionable custom of the single rein, had not Mr. Martin mentioned the subject to me.

How to Handle the Reins.—Little can be said on the all-important subject of “hands,” beyond stating that the touch of the rider’s fingers on the reins ought to be as delicate, though at the same time firm, as those of a pianist on the keys of his instrument. Sam Chifney says, you should ride “as if you had a silken rein as fine as a hair, and that you were afraid of breaking it.” If the

horse throws up his head, when trying to "break away," "drop your hands," and he will then lower his head; when he does so, take a pull at him, for his head is then in the proper position for the bit to act on the gums. When his head is in the air, the snaffle will act only on the corners of his mouth. Never keep a dead pull on the reins, but "give and take," so that the horse may understand your wishes by the feeling of his mouth. Who has ever seen a horse run away with George Fordham? And yet he has but a small amount of "brute force."

The jockey should keep his hands "down," so that the horse may be able to carry his head and neck in the best possible manner for favouring the movements of his limbs and loins. It is most important that the natural position of the vertebræ of the neck and back should not be interfered with. We know from experience that a horse cannot kick freely if his head is held up. Neither can he gallop "in form" with his nose in the air. The hands alone must be employed to keep the head down, for if a short martingale be used, the probability is that the horse will not face it kindly. That valuable piece of saddle-gear should be employed only for giving the rider a good "hold" of the horse's head, and for enabling him to keep him straight.

Starting.—Whether the orders are to wait, or to make the running, the jockey should employ every legitimate means to “get off” as quickly as he can, for whatever distance is lost at the start must be made up when the horses are galloping, at which time the effort to regain the lost lengths may, very possibly, be equivalent to throwing away an advantage of as many pounds. We should remember that the faster horses are going, the greater is the effort required to make up lost ground. Although a horse may, when his field are merely cantering, decrease a gap of five or six lengths, with but a trifling expenditure of force; still, when they come to race against each other, to make up such a distance in, say, half a mile, may make quite a 7 lbs. difference. When walking up to the starter, the jockey should sit down in the saddle with his seat well under him, so that he may not be jerked back on to the cantle, or pulled over the pommel of the saddle, in the event of the horse suddenly springing forward, or swinging his head down and stretching out his neck, as impetuous ones will sometimes do; he should press his legs to the horse’s sides so as to keep him up to the bridle; he should ride with sufficiently long reins to avoid the possibility of checking

the horse when he is getting into his stride, and should be "off" with the drop of the flag. When coming up into line, he should keep his horse as much on the move as possible, for one that is bending and prancing a bit will gain lengths of another which walks sluggishly up, although they may be perfectly level at the moment when the starter gives the signal. Lads learn the tricks of starting—such as stopping a little behind and then coming into line at a canter, while the others are walking, on the chance of the starter letting them go—quite soon enough, without it being necessary for me to allude to such practices, further than to say that they don't "pay," especially with a starter who will not stand any nonsense.

I might here suggest to the genuine lover of the turf, that considerable information, pleasure, and even profit may be obtained from closely watching the start, not only for the larger and more important races, but occasionally for the five and six furlong siccaries. The careful observer will learn much of the tactics of the celebrated horsemen of the day, and, with his heart in the sport, will not fail to be struck by the many instances in which the jockey's efforts at the post are understood and assisted by his horse.

“I remember,” observes my friend Captain Jones, “a notable instance of this in the case of the celebrated mare, Nutbush, the property of Captain Hawksley. My readers who can look back upon something like fifteen or sixteen years of turf history will not fail to remember this veritable flier, which at five furlongs was well-nigh invincible, and which won several good handicaps when a three-year-old, with steadyng weights ranging from 9 st. to 10 st. 4 lb. Indeed, her sensational match with Little Lady, the property of Lord Stamford, who was then betting very heavily, will always keep her memory green.

“She was in nearly every instance ridden by George Fordham, and so thoroughly acquainted was she with her business at the post, that nothing would induce her to take her eyes off the starter’s flag. Notwithstanding frequent—shall I write—“kidding” attempts of the Demon, as *he* was then called, to persuade her that it was a start, she would never move one inch until the starter himself gave the signal which she knew so well. Then, she put matters beyond dispute, for she was into her bridle in an instant, and was well clear of her field in the first hundred yards, thus adding an incalculable advantage to her naturally magnificent turn of speed.

“I do not think that some of the younger generation, who are always scheming and contriving to get an inside place and a flying start, would have done a tithe of the good for the mare which her own natural sagacity and love of the game did for her, and for her legion of backers, many of whom profited largely by reason of their knowledge of this peculiarity of the flying Nutbush.”

The saying that a man will always beat a boy when it comes to racing is equally true when applied to starting. “At the start, boys (for I allude to them—the light weights of the present day) are generally left at the post or get badly off, and ride their horses to a standstill before half the distance has been gone over, in the vain hope of regaining their lost ground.” (*Mr. William Day.*) How often it happens that in a big handicap, after two or three false starts, the light weights are “all over the place,” while their horses are fretful and out of hand. When they return with difficulty to the starter, they are unable to get them quickly “on their legs,” and the let them “go all abroad” with the certainty of running them to a standstill before they can steady them; whi one of the top weights, who on public form appears have 7 lbs. the worst of the handicap, gets off we front with his horse cool and collected, and is not cau_z

by the lightly-penalised ones, until their bad start, or misapplied efforts, have deprived them of the greater part of the advantage which they appeared to have had on paper. After that, when it comes to a finish, what chance can a tired weak boy have against a strong resolute man?

Mr. William Day, in his valuable work, 'The Race-horse in Training,' cites the following instances of inferior riding nullifying advantages of weight. "Fräulein, running at Goodwood in the Stewards' Cup, with 6 st. 4 lbs. on her, was not placed; but running afterwards for the Doncaster Cup, beat Marie Stewart, and won other races at other places in the hands of men, showing about 3 st. improvement. Again, we see at the same meeting (Goodwood) that Valuer, running with 6 st. 4 lbs. on his back, was not one of the first twenty; and yet he was always better than Historian at even weights. He ran no better at Newmarket with similar weights the same year, which was some 28 lbs. worse than his real form—a fact that was afterwards publicly proved by the many races he won when carrying 2 st. more in much the same company."

The different Ways of Riding a Race may be generally summed up as follows: 1. Waiting; 2. Making

the running ; 3. Waiting in front ; 4. Keeping with one's horses, and then coming away at the finish and winning if one can. As it is impossible to foretell how a race will be run, or what changes may occur while the horses are actually running, the jockey should be ready to vary his tactics according to circumstances with the utmost promptness. When we consider that the time for action often lasts but for two or three seconds, during which to calculate the various chances and to resolve what to do, we shall cease to wonder that this jockey instinct, or intuitive power of grasping the situation, combined with quickness and courage to act, is as rare a mental faculty as genius in any other walk of life. Possibly, a dozen men in England who can ride 8 st. 7 lbs. possess it ; probably, not as many.

Judging Pace.—A jockey should not alone have a firm seat, good hands, be thoroughly well up in all the tactics of race riding, and have courage and dash to carry them out as opportunity may offer, but should also know at what pace his own horse is going compared to that of the other runners, should be able to regulate the speed so that he may have the best possible chance of "getting home" successfully, and should be able to select the exact spot from which he ought to make

his effort at the finish. Constant practice, as well as natural aptitude, is necessary to enable one to acquire the almost instinctive faculty for judging pace.

Waiting.—As a rule, a jockey should “wait.” By doing so, the horse does not incur the risk of being “carried off his legs,” and of being run to a standstill. The rider can see how the other horses are going, and having ascertained this, can remain, for the present, where he is, or go in front. If he injudiciously forces the pace from the start, he will probably not find out the mistake he has made until after the race is virtually lost.

Lord Clifden’s race for the St. Leger admirably illustrates the argument used in the preceding paragraph. He was left 30 yards at the post, and before they had gone a quarter of a mile, he was a good 150 yards behind the leading horse. It is hardly a reflection upon living jockeys to say that no other rider breathing could have exhibited the same magnificent judgment of pace, the same incredible patience, and the same indomitable determination, as did John Osborne. The dealers in the dead could not understand what it meant when they saw the big horse coming up to his field at the Red House. They did *not* believe their eyes

when they saw him in a good place on entering the straight, and many of them have not yet recovered the shock which they received, when his number was hoisted as the gallant winner of the gamest and best-ridden race which this generation has witnessed.

Horses, generally, go better and settle down in their gallop sooner with a lead than without one. This is especially true with two- and young three- year-olds, which are apt to sprawl about, and go on with all sorts of "calfish" tricks when they are in front, at least during the first part of a race. Some horses, however, will never run kindly except when leading.

A capital jockey, who had not the reputation of always riding to win, once told me that he learned to appreciate the advantages of waiting, from observing the manner in which horses that made the running "came back" to him, when he was on "crock" which had no chance, and of which he did not make very much "use."

If the orders be to wait, they should not be carried out, as is sometimes done, by losing the start, or by pulling the horse out of his stride in order to get him behind at all hazards. The jockey, on the contrary, should get away as well as possible, and should settle

down as soon as he can into a steady uniform pace, a trifle slower than that of those who are "making play," and should then wait until they "come back" to him, or until he arrives at the spot from which he sees it judicious to recover the lost ground. He should, then, gradually draw up to the front in time to make his effort, judging from the way the horses he has most to fear are going, and by the distance they are from him. He should then sit down in the saddle, "catch hold" of his horse's head, and trust to speed to make up lost ground and to win the race.

It is a very general idea that light weights should make the running, or at least have it made for them, while heavy weights should wait. I am convinced, however, that, if the light weight is possessed of a fair turn of speed, it is sound policy for his jockey to wait with him—always supposing that the race is over a certain distance of ground, and that it is not run at too slow a pace; because, when it comes to racing at the finish, the light weight, being comparatively untired, ought then to have the best possible chance of successfully getting home; for we must recollect that any moderate plater, if started fresh for the last few hundred yards of a two-mile race,

would beat the best and fastest stayer in the kingdom. Weight tires a horse, and breaks his heart quite as readily as pace will do. A horse, in fact, should be ridden more with regard to the distance he can compass, than to the weight he has to carry.

I may observe in passing, that it is a very general idea that weight "tells" on a horse, in a race, only after a certain distance has been run. I am inclined to think that this supposition is erroneous, and that every pound of extra weight, on a horse's back, diminishes the rate of speed at which he can travel, even during the early portion of the journey, when he is quite untired.

Making the Running.—A jockey should never make his own running, except when he is on a horse that frets or goes unkindly when there is anything in front of him, or when he cannot get any other rider to force the pace fast enough.

If a jockey who has received orders to make use of his horse and not to wait, finds that the pace is made quite strong enough, he will, if he be a good judge, wait close at hand on the leader or leaders, and will be ready, when they are beaten, to go to the front, by which time he ought to know the exact state of affairs. If, however, he be incapable of acting up to the spirit of his orders,

he will, probably, run his horse to a standstill, from being unable to "let well alone." Anyhow, he should endeavour to judge the pace, so that the horse will have just enough left in him to make his effort at the finish, in the event of being collared. I would never give orders to make running unless my horse was a comparatively good stayer, and was rather deficient in speed. One of this sort, even when carrying a heavy weight, would, as far as my experience goes, be best suited by the pace being made strong all through. Of course I am taking for granted that the jockey's sole idea is to win, and that he is not sent simply to "make play" for anyone else.

"I may here mention an interesting fact, which is the cause, undoubtedly, of unsatisfactory performances in long-distance races. It is the waiting too long for, or more strictly speaking, perhaps, it should be called, the lying back too far from, the horse that is detailed to do the work. As a rule, the distance between the two is some eight or ten lengths. It should never exceed two or three lengths; for if you concede more, you are virtually making, not a fast, but a waiting race of it." (*Mr. William Day.*)

It may be good policy, when the ground is heavy, for

a light weight to make the running, as weight tells far more through "dirt," than when the horses can hear their feet rattle.

Waiting in Front.—Many horses are so impetuous that, in a slow-run race, they cannot be kept behind without more being "taken out" of them than the extra speed would do, were they allowed to go freely. If such a one be not a particularly good stayer, his jockey should wait in front with him ; in other words, he should merely keep in front without forcing the running on his own account, and should simply conform to the pace of those immediately behind him, until the moment arrives for him to make his effort. A horse should never be kept back to an extent which will cause him to "fight in his gallop." It is far better for him to be allowed to go at a speed just beyond that at which he would expend his strength in the air. I may observe that the pace will steady, as well as hold, most horses.

Keeping with one's Horses.—The easiest of all tactics to pursue is to keep with one's horses until the finish, and then to come away if one can.

General Remarks on Race Riding.—During a race, the jockey should, as a rule, stand in his stirrups until he sits down to finish.

He should avoid, as much as possible, keeping alongside any of the other horses, especially when he is on an impetuous animal, for galloping stride for stride excites a horse, and throws him out of the even, steady stroke he ought to preserve. On the contrary, he should, if not wanting to force the running, keep behind, or a little to one side, of some horse in front, and wait till he gives way to take his place, or until the time comes for "getting through." It has often happened that the best horse in a race has lost it from some of the other jockeys racing directly alongside him, from time to time, in order to make him pull and tire himself out. In acting thus, a jockey, of course, intentionally sacrifices his own chance in order to secure the defeat of the favourite. If a man finds that this "little game is being tried on" him, he should get in the track of one of the leaders, if there be any in front, so that his horse, seeing another directly before him, may not pull over much or break away; or he might pull a little back.

During a race, a jockey should not try to pass any horse which is going as well and as strong as his own. He should, on the contrary, wait until the other begins to give way, when he may then draw up and take his

place. I cannot too forcibly impress the necessity of *patience*.

When a jockey finds that his horse can go no faster than he is galloping at the time being, he should almost invariably take a pull at him, if only for half-a-dozen strides, in order to give him a chance of "coming again," which he could not do were he not eased off for a moment. Exceptions to this would be, when the jockey is close to the winning-post, has the lead, and finds he can keep it; and when his horse is one of the jady kind which won't stand their mouths being touched.

If a jockey, who has waiting orders, finds that all the others are acting as if they had similar instructions, he should try to avoid "getting the slip" from any of them. This manœuvre is carried out, when they are going slow, by a rider catching his horse by the head and sending him, it may be, five or six lengths in advance of his field, before the other jockeys are aware of his intention. These lengths, gained thus with but trifling exertion when the pace was bad, may be worth as many pounds when they begin to race.

It sometimes happens that the riders of the two best horses wait too long on each other, and thus allow their field a start which cannot be recovered in time.

As a rule, in a match, if one's opponent be on a "cur," one should try to jump off with the lead, and cut out the running at once, whatever sort of a horse one may be on, provided he be but "game," for nothing makes a rogue shut up so soon as being collared.

Inexperienced riders are often deluded into waiting when they ought to go on, by a jockey pretending to flog, when in reality he is but whipping his boot. This dodge is, of course, only "tried on" by the rider of the speedier horse of the two, in the hope of inducing the man on the stayer to slacken speed from the idea that he has the race in hand, and that there is no use in hurrying. I need hardly say that, if a man perceives his opponent pursuing these tactics, he should keep on at his own pace or increase his speed, supposing, of course, that there is no other horse formidable in the race.

There are numberless instances of races won and lost by what I suppose I must call strategy—but which others, less charitable than I, might call by another name. A case in point occurred some years ago in a race of not fragrant memory in the minds of race-goers—the Liverpool Cup. The rider of the leading horse—the subsequent winner — suffered from the infirmity of deafness. The rider of the horse immediately behind

the leader, seeing that he had nothing else to beat, holloaed at the top of his voice: "Pull out of my way —you are beaten!" So great was the reputation of the formidable jockey behind him, that had our deaf friend heard him, there is no manner of doubt but that he would have "pulled out of the way." Fortunately he did *not* hear, and won very easily. This is the only case which I can quote as of the advantage of having defective hearing—at least, at racing.

I remember, however, a case that occurred abroad, in which rascality was frustrated by the fact of a would-be tempter having an impediment in his speech. A jockey who stammered very badly, had backed the horse he was riding, for a great deal of money. At the distance post he found himself collared by an outsider, which came up full of running. Knowing his man, he stammered out to his unexpected opponent: "I—I—I w—w—will g—g—g—"; but, in the excitement of the moment, he could not complete his sentence. Brimful of mortification at his loss, he reproached his friend for not having listened to him, and said that he would have given him a hundred to have pulled. "Then why the deuce didn't you say so," was all the consolation he got from his brother rogue.

If a jockey be behind two horses—the leading one close to the inside of the course, while the other is a little away from it, but in rear of the leader—he should never attempt to get through on the inside, unless he knows what sort of men he has to deal with, and that there is a good chance of their giving way for him ; for all that the second jockey will have to do, in order to shut him in, will be to close up on the leader. He will then be obliged to slacken speed, so as to let the second horse pass him, before he can get round on the outside. If the two leaders act in concert, they may slacken speed at the same time as he does, and keep him hemmed in until all chance of winning be passed. Many who ought to have known better, have been caught in this trap. As this manœuvre is accomplished without any crossing or jostling, it does not come under the head of foul riding, according to racing law.

It is, generally, dangerous to try to get through on the inside, for many men will refuse to give way, or to pull out, while it is anything but pleasant to be shoved up against a post, or against the railings.

The “Old Castilian” reminds me that the watchful racegoer will see this well exemplified at many of our Northern meetings, where a strong rivalry exists be-

tween the North- and South-country riders. "Of this rivalry," says he, "I have a sound practical experience, as at Chester, some years ago, a jockey, who was riding a horse which belonged to a great friend of mine, and which we had backed for a considerable sum of money, had unhappily, I believe, given offence to a Northerner. Two of his confrères "nursed" our jockey so carefully that they very nearly had him twice over the rails between the bridge and home, the result being that we were beaten a neck. Within a month my friend's mare, meeting her previous conqueror at 16 lbs. worse terms, on another course, beat him in a canter. By this dangerous practice, the jockey very nearly lost his life, while my friend and I lost our money."

When carrying a heavy weight, one should never allow a dangerous light weight to get too far in front.

A jockey ought to pay due attention to the nature of the ground over which he has to go, and to any peculiarities possessed by his mount. It is almost unnecessary to quote here the historical sheep-track on the Cambridgeshire Hill at Newmarket. All riders in that race consider it an immense advantage to obtain possession of that path. Lord Poulett will long remember how his well-planned coup with Nu was upset by the jady Garde-

visure, who owed her success entirely to her pilot having secured this much-coveted place. If a part of the course be heavy or hilly, the jockey might ease his horse a little ; while he might rattle him along down-hill, or where the ground was sound, always supposing that his legs and feet can stand it. Horses with short, upright pasterns are most unsuited to go down a hill—the running of Vauban, the Two Thousand winner, in the Derby, was a good example of this fact—neither do they act particularly well on hard ground ; while those with sloping pasterns generally like to hear their feet rattle, and do not get their legs jarred when going down an incline. Horses with rather high action and good hocks are the best to climb a hill. The possession of large broad feet is most useful on a heavy course, from the mechanical advantage they have over small feet. A compact, quick-striding horse, like what Freeman was, is well adapted for a cramped course, like the Rodee at Chester, while a big long-striding animal—Lord Clifden, for instance—requires a straight level course, like that at Doncaster, on which to display his powers. The length and height of a horse does not matter so much, provided he has quick hind action and gets his hocks well under him. Knight of the Garter, who was one of this sort, though

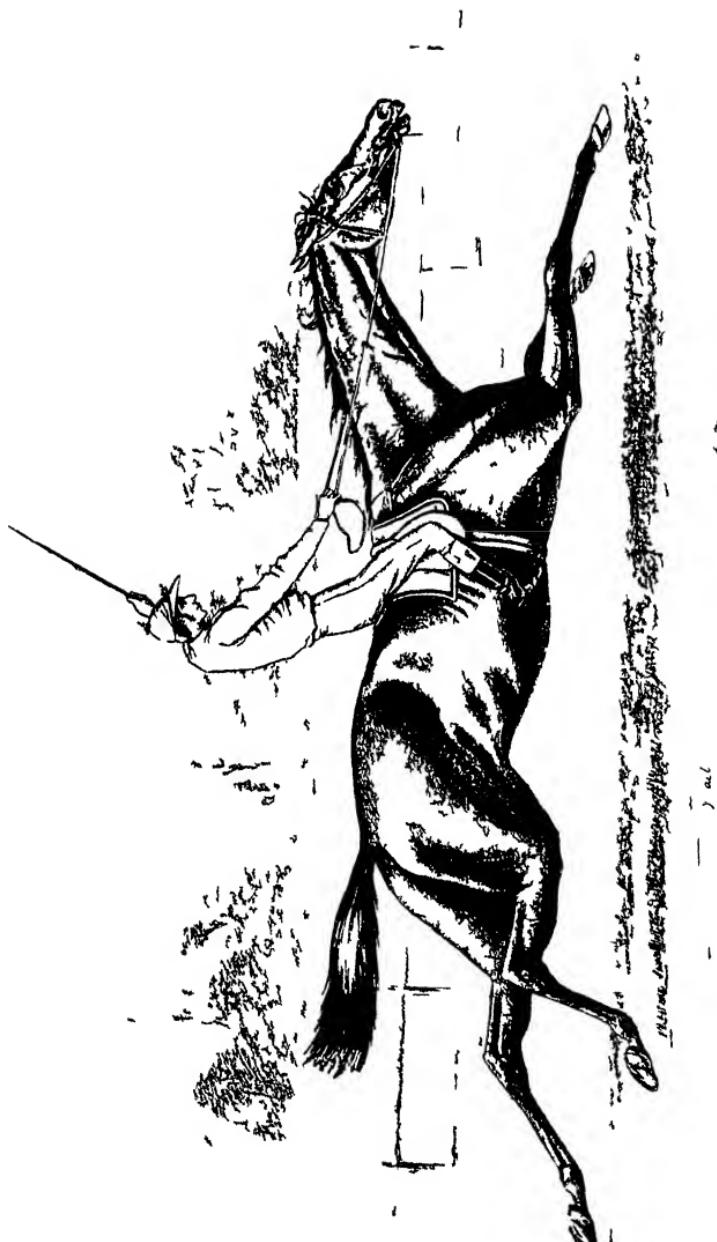
an immensely long horse, squandered his field in the Chester Cup for 1869, with 9 st. 1 lb. up. Also, Asteroid, who was built on a large scale, won in 1863, carrying 9 st. 4 lbs., beating fifteen others. At Liverpool, which is a very roundabout course, the Cup was won in 1872 and 1873 by those big horses, Vanderdecken, 3 yrs., and Sterling, 5 yrs.. The former, carrying 7 st. 8 lbs., beat a field of twenty; while the latter, with 9 st. 4 lbs. up, defeated fourteen others. Unsound horses, as a rule, act best on a soft course, especially those with any tendency to laminitis, or navicular disease. Old horses, which are somewhat stiff on their legs, should have a steady preliminary canter to warm them up before starting. Certain horses appear to have a special liking for certain courses and varieties of ground. Game, honest horses are often several pounds better, when facing a hill, than one with a suspicion of "softness," though they might be as nearly equal as possible on the flat.

The Seat when Finishing.—When a jockey wants to finish, he should sit down in the centre of his saddle with his seat as much under him as possible. He should catch a good hold of the horse's head so as to collect him at each stride; he should lean slightly back; should grip the flaps of the saddle tightly with his

knees, and draw his feet well back, so that the weight, at each stroke of the horse's hind legs, may not come with a jerk on the stirrups, which would cause it, by reaction, to be thrown to the rear, and would thus increase the work the horse has to do. The hands and arms should yield to the extension of the horse's neck at each stride, without, however, slackening the reins in the slightest. The rider should avoid the unsightly trick of working his hands in a circle round and round; they ought, on the contrary, to give and take in the direction the horse is going, and ought to have no side motion. The hands should be brought within four or five inches of each other, and should be kept low, say—not more than six inches above the withers.

The rider having assumed this position, should conform to the movements of the horse, so that the weight may impede him as little as possible (see p. 185). The seat and thighs of the rider should appear as if they were glued to the saddle, while there ought not to be the slightest approach to any bumping up and down. Whether the jockey can, or cannot, relieve the horse of weight, by giving a forward impulse to his body when the hind legs are on the ground, is a question which does not concern us here, nor is it one of practical

application. In this connection I may quote the utterance of an experienced Newmarket trainer, who, when the owner asked him to whom he should give a mount in a race for a good stake: "Oh, sir, put up Archer. He packs himself up so, that I believe he rides 7 lbs lighter than his real weight." The owner did, and Archer won. It is sufficient for us to know that when a man sits down and finishes in proper style, the horse is enabled to travel faster than he can do when any other kind of seat is adopted. We know that "dead weight," over which the muscles of the jockey cannot exercise any influence, is particularly disadvantageous at a finish, however well placed it may be. We are also aware that if a man be tired or weak, however "still" he may sit, his horse will not be able to gallop by any means as fast as he would do, were the rider fresh and strong. These facts seem to indicate that the jockey can afford a certain amount of mechanical assistance to his horse, which cannot be derived from the reins, for, although they may serve to "collect" him, or to retard his speed, they are powerless to give him any onward impulse. As the legs of the rider are the only other parts which connect him to the horse, the "lift"—if there be one—must proceed from them,



and may be the result of the weight being, more or less, taken off the horse's back at each instant, as his hind feet make their stroke. Colonel Greenwood, in his excellent book, 'Hints on Horsemanship,' considers that such mechanical assistance can be given. We know that the rider may aid the horse by adjusting his weight, during each stride, so that it may impede the animal's movements as little as possible (see p. 186), but whether he can give him any further assistance, or not, is a question which I am unable to decide.

A man requires a great deal of practice to finish well, while, if he does it badly, he is certain to impede the horse's movements by rolling about in the saddle; hence, if he be not expert in the art, he should not attempt to practise it, but should endeavour to sit as still as possible, catch a good hold of his horse's head, and should assume the position which he finds to be the easiest one for the horse and for himself. As the action of finishing is very fatiguing to the jockey, he does not, as a rule, "sit down" before he comes to the distance post.

On Finishing.—At a finish it is generally best to be on the side furthest away from the judge. When two horses are coming up the straight, on perfectly even

terms, the farthest-off one will, of necessity, appear to the spectator to be ahead of the other. It is, therefore, very difficult for the judge, in a close finish, to efface entirely from his mind an impression of, say ten or twelve seconds' duration. It has happened that when the actual winner has finished close under the judge's box, that he was not even placed by that official. If the jockey cannot use his whip in his left hand, he might keep on the whip hand of his most dangerous opponent, who might, if he was on his near side, close in, either intentionally or by his horse swerving, and might thus prevent him from using the whip with the right hand. If the horse has a tendency to swerve off, under punishment, to the outside of a course, it may be just as well to have something on the near side, so as to keep one's own horse straight.

Before sitting down to finish, it is generally advisable, especially if the race has been run at a strong pace, to take a pull at one's horse for a few strides, so as to enable him to catch his wind, and to collect himself before he makes his effort.

Care should be taken not to suddenly begin to finish on a long-striding horse ; he should, on the contrary, be prepared for his effort, so that he may not be thrown out

of his stride. A quick, short-striding animal will dash into full speed in an instant.

It is a dangerous and often a fatal mistake for a jockey to ease his horse, or to cease riding him, when leading and close to the winning-post, for by doing so he may make him "stop," and may then be unable to get him into his stride again, in time to "stall off a rush" from one of the others.

Even the great George Fordham was once caught napping in this way, when riding for his then constant employer, Mr. Ten Broeck. Neither of the two will ever forget how Sam Rogers swooped down on Fordham, who was riding Amy. She had, to all intents and purposes, won her race, when the Demon took a pull, thinking that the other one was beaten, and then he could not set her going again in time.

At a finish, if one finds that the leader has the race easy, one might get directly behind him, on the chance of his slackening speed to look round, or to look at his boots, or at the stand, and then one may, with a rush on the side away from which the other's head is turned, manage to beat him on the post, before he can set his horse going again.

Many an important event has been lost from over-

confidence of the rider of the leading horse, who, when winning easily, has tried to make a race of it for "the gallery," or has been cajoled into slackening his speed by one of the other jockeys, and has then been unable to make an effort in time when required to do so.

As a last piece of advice, I would recommend the tyro never to be too anxious "to get home," and never "to draw it too fine."

On Riding Rogues.—As the generality of "rogues" will run kindly enough, until they are pressed or hustled, a jockey when riding one of this sort should, as a rule, make the running, or at least keep with the leaders, and, if he finds that he is winning easily at the finish, he should, on no account, take a pull, or allow any of the others, if he can help it, to close up on him, for many rogues will either not try a yard, or win by "the length of a street." The jockey should sit still, ride as quietly as possible, and should do all he can to persuade the jady one that he is running away. It often happens that the more the rider pulls, the faster will the "rogue" go. The jockey should allow him to make his own running and effort while interfering with him as little as possible. Horses learn so quickly what a race means, that I believe better results than we often

get would be obtained, were we to trust more to their judgment than we do, as to how they should be ridden in their races.

Rogues run very much better in a match or in a very small field than they do in a crowd.

“Of this indisputable truth,” remarks Captain Jones, “I have had ample proof. It has always been a matter of surprise to me, that trainers do not teach young horses their lessons in scenes and under circumstances resembling, as much as possible, those under which they have subsequently to fight their battles, and, oftentimes, to carry their masters’ fortunes. I am led to this reflection by an old reminiscence of a horse of my own, which I had bought as a two-year-old. He was as well bred as Eclipse, and of real racing shape and make. He had run but once as a two-year-old. I bought him in October for a good round sum, by the advice of a friend of ripe and rare judgment. He wintered well. Wanting to try him alongside another horse early in the year, I put four of them together, and galloped them a mile *in their clothing*, far away from sight or sound. To my delighted amazement, the young one seemed to hold the old horse (one of some pretensions) the whole distance, and was only beaten half a length. If this form were

correct, there was nothing beyond my reach for that year, not even the Derby, as the horses were carrying boys of the same weight, while my old horses, which had won good races before this (and, I may add, since), would have made small work of three-year-olds at even weights. I believed I had a treasure, but to make assurance doubly sure, I determined to try them regularly, with jockeys in boots and breeches, and as close an imitation of the real thing as I could devise. Alas for the result ! The young horse was beaten two hundred yards ! He could not be got to gallop in *public*, although he was a perfect kill-devil at exercise.

“I gave him another chance in a good class race with an 8 st. 10 lbs. man on his back. The brute led his field to the distance, and looked like coming in alone. Directly the shouting commenced, and he could see the crowd, he shut up like a clasp-knife, and was shortly after relegated to the cab-rank, in which I hope he will long live to expiate the sin of the unfulfilled promise of his youth.”

If a jady horse manages to run a dead heat in a race for which there are several starters, the chances are in favour of his winning the deciding heat, supposing that he has not had much punishment. I was much im-

pressed with this fact on seeing the running of The Ghost, in The Clewer Welter, at the Windsor July Meeting for 1877. This arrant thief, who was a non-stayer, ran a dead heat, Custance up, in the race in question, with Mr. Gretton's Dovedale, steered by Cannon. I knew the mare could stay a bit, so backed her in the deciding heat, and lost my money, as The Ghost won cleverly. Although the second journey was all against him, he ran quite a different horse to what he did the first time of asking.

One may try the effect of giving a rogue, a quarter of an hour before his race, half a bottle (not more) of port or sherry in order to make him run kindly. Though horses can take, comparatively, enormous quantities of certain drugs with impunity, still they cannot drink much more than twice the amount that an ordinary man can, without becoming intoxicated.

On Riding Pullers.—Although a curb is objectionable from its tendency to make a horse go "round" and high, still, if the jockey cannot hold the horse in any kind of snaffle, it is better for him to use a curb, taking care to put it low down in his mouth, than to take the chance of his running himself to a standstill, or to be obliged to saw his mouth or pull his head about, so as

to keep him in his place. Speaking to and humouring a horse a little will often make him stop pulling. The remarks I have made on page 40 about dropping the hands when a horse gets his head up, and taking a pull the moment he lowers it, may be referred to here. I have remarked on page 192 that thin snaffles have a tendency to make horses pull. If possible, a large smooth snaffle should be used. If that does not prove sufficient to hold a horse, a chain snaffle may be tried. We may take for granted, especially as the pace will hold most of them, that it is the fault of the jockey if a horse runs away in a race. Allowance should of course be made for small weak lads.

As the majority of hard, determined pullers are done running, when they stop pulling, being then left without the power of making an effort, a jockey ought to be particularly careful to "keep a bit in hand" with a horse of this sort.

That hard pullers often fail to stay is frequently the fault of their riders. I quite agree with Hiram Woodruff, the celebrated American trainer, when he remarks that, "It is often said that a horse cannot pull hard and last ; and this is contrary to the facts that I am about to mention. Trustee lasted ; and he was a hard puller.

Captain McGowan lasted ; and he was the hardest-pulling horse in America, I suppose. Dexter pulls a pound or two, I can assure you ; and he has shown his capacity to go on. The truth is, that the pulling horses last well enough, but the riders do not last so long. It is just so with the runners."

Orders.—As a rule, never give orders, if your jockey is a fairly good one, though the trainer might briefly tell him the horse's good and bad points from a racing point of view. It is always injudicious to lay down precise directions, such as to keep a certain number of lengths behind the leading horse, who may be sent from the start to cut out the running for another, at a pace which might cause him to collapse long before the distance post is reached ; or to wait on some particular horse—a proceeding which has been the cause of many a mistake, for the dreaded one may turn out a rank duffer which is unable to go fast, so that the jockey, by waiting on him, may have in the meantime allowed the others to get so far ahead that he will not be able to catch them before it is too late ; or he may run himself to a standstill in endeavouring to keep the lead all through. If a jockey be capable of carrying out minute instructions, he will certainly be clever enough to accom-

plish the far easier and more profitable task of acting up to the spirit of broad general directions. As a rule, it is much better to ride a race so as to suit the capabilities of one's own horse (with which one ought to be fully acquainted), than to devote one's entire attention to the weak points of the supposed dangerous horse or horses, which must naturally be problematical; for this reason, I would never hamper a jockey's judgment by laying out the programme cut and dry, but would simply tell him my horse's peculiarities, and what kind of running would most likely bring him home. For instance, with a fast horse in a one-and-a-half-mile race, instead of telling an inexperienced rider to wait so many lengths behind, I might say, "Get off well and keep a good bit in hand for half the journey, gradually get up within a couple of lengths of the horses which are going strongest in front of you at the distance post, take a pull for a few strides if you find your horse at all distressed, and make your effort the moment you think you can get home." If the animal then gets beaten, the probability is that the winner was the better horse of the two at the weights and distance run—a fact which owners of defeated horses often overlook.

If I remember rightly, it was Mr. F. Swindells, than

whom no one, in any age, has ever pursued such a successful turf career, who replied to a jockey that asked him how he was to ride his horse: "Nay, lad, that is thy business to know how the horse should be ridden ; I cannot teach thee."

On the Use of Spurs during a Race.—Spurs ought to be put on for a race, unless the horse runs unkindly when they are used, or the jockey is such a bad rider that he cannot spur properly at a finish, or cannot help touching his horse with them. After taking one's spurs off to ride a rogue, it may be just as well, in the preliminary canter, to touch him a couple of times with one's heels in order to show him that he need not fear punishment from them. Some horses, on the contrary, will not extend themselves unless the rider has spurs on.

The proper way to use the spurs is to turn out the toes and strike as close behind the girth as possible, without raising the heels in the slightest when doing so. The feet should on no account be swung back. Nothing is more unworkmanlike than scoring the horse's sides with the spurs by raising or drawing back the heels. Bad riders not unfrequently spur a horse about the shoulders ; while men, who never ought to have been

given a mount, have been known to spur a horse on his stifles. When inferior horsemen use spurs, they ought to have them as short as possible.

As a rule, a horse should not be touched with the spurs until the jockey sits down to finish, when three or four digs will be quite enough to make any ordinary animal exert himself to the utmost. An inexperienced rider ought to endeavour to make his horse go fast at a finish by catching a good hold of his head and "riding him out," and not by spurring or flogging him.

"Too much importance," says Captain Jones, "cannot be given to this subject. The indiscriminate use of spurs by boys, who stick a pair of pitchforks as large as themselves upon their heels, has for years made the judicious grieve. I have had in my own possession two racehorses who would *not* go if their riders wore spurs, even if they did not use them. If the animals saw these instruments of torture, they at once declined the contest, and went to the starting post in a series of buck-jumps, returning to the winning post by the same mode of locomotion, never once settling down to gallop. I should allow no rider, except the few shining lights at the head of their profession, to even

wear them. The smaller artists puff and fume a little at being deprived of their weapons, but a little firmness on the part of an owner who will not allow his horse to be sacrificed or ill-treated, will soon bring them to their bearings."

On one occasion, Hayhoe, who was training the late Baron Rothschild's two-year-old filly, Tomato, told Edwin Martin to ride her a gallop with spurs, and to touch her with them, just to show her what they were like. The jockey did so, and the filly finished her work in a satisfactory manner. A few days after, Martin got on Tomato with spurs, to ride her a trial, but she refused to move a step, and began to shiver and buck-jump as if something was wrong. Martin dismounted, and they took off the saddle, thinking it might be pinching her, or that a thorn or thistle might have got into the pannal. As the gear was found to be all right, Martin remounted, but with the same result. At last, at Hayhoe's suggestion, the spurs were taken off. The moment that was done, the filly walked off as quiet as a lamb, thereby giving them to know, as plain as words could have told, what her ideas on spurring were. During her future career she never had spurs used with her, and always ran kind and game.

On the Use of the Whip.—When hands and spurs fail to make a horse go fast enough to win his race, we may use the whip, if it be a very “near thing,” to squeeze the last ounce out of the horse. Horses, when ridden by a workman, will undoubtedly, under the whip, make a last effort which cannot be obtained by any other means of punishment. This effort, speaking in general terms, may make a difference of a length, perhaps even of two lengths, in some rare cases. Recollecting the risk we run of spoiling a horse’s temper for the rest of his life by flogging him, we may take it for granted that we should not use the whip, if we have to trust to it to make up more than two lengths to secure the judge’s verdict. A horse, as Mr. Edwin Martin, the well-known Newmarket trainer, once remarked to me, cannot, at the end of a race, go farther than a hundred yards at his very utmost speed without beginning to shorten his stride and go slower; hence we may conclude that our last resource, the whip, should not be used until we are within a hundred yards of the winning post. Practically speaking, the whip should be very rarely indeed “picked up” before the last thirty or forty yards, nor should more than two or three cuts be given. When a jockey begins to flog, as many of them do, two

or three hundred yards from home, we need not be surprised at seeing his horse, after answering the call for ten or a dozen strides, go slower and slower as he nears the judge's box. The horse is then probably condemned as a rogue, while the jockey is praised as a resolute finisher. Some of our best jockeys, now and then, flourish the whip at a finish without hitting the horse, as a "bit of kid," or to make him travel faster than he is doing without punishing him.

Mr. Edwin Martin tells me that he teaches his boys to carry their sticks in the left hand, so that they may use the whip equally well with both hands. Unless a lad is left-handed, he will have no difficulty with the right. If a horse be inclined to jump about, it will be very awkward for the jockey if he can use the whip—not to punish, but simply to steady him—with only one hand. Martin very justly advises, that, on right-handed courses, the whip, as a rule, should be carried in the left hand. A horse, when he does so, usually hangs or bears off to the left. It is well, he observes, to hold the whip in the outside hand, i.e. in the one farthest away from one's opponents, so that the horse's attention may be balanced, if I may use the term. If both the whip and "the field" are on one side, the horse will not go as

straight and level as he would do, were they on different sides of him.

Bad as the spurs are, with respect to ruining a horse's temper and breaking his heart, their evil effects are as nothing compared with those of the whip. I may safely say that a large percentage of horses which have been once severely punished with the whip by a powerful rider, are thereby rendered useless, as racehorses, for the remainder of their lives, whenever they have to contend in a close finish. Cecil, in his excellent little book, 'Stable Practice,' remarks ~~about~~ the whip, that "not much benefit often results from it, except with game and indolent animals; and in using both that and the spurs, unless the horse is found to respond to the call, good feeling and prudence forbid their use. Inflicting pain on an animal when he is doing his best, is not only wanton cruelty, but appears something like punishing him because he is going as fast as his powers will enable him. Horses have retentive memories, and there is no doubt many will cease to struggle at the moment they are called upon to do so, from reminiscences of former punishment."

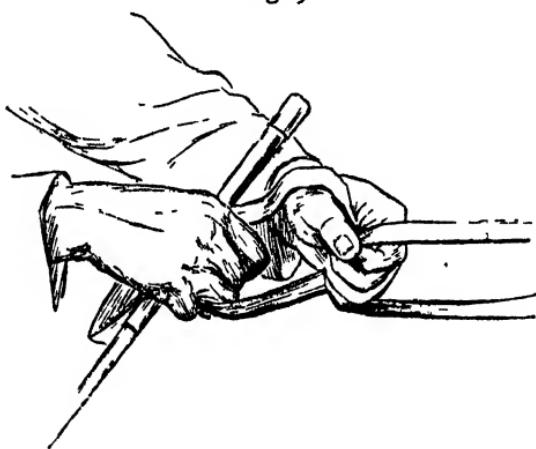
A jockey should strike a horse with the whip nowhere else except just behind the girth, unless when

preventing him from swerving, etc. When he is hit in this manner, the side away from the whip hand will, if anything, be hurt more than the other, so that the horse will not be so liable to swerve as he would be, were he hit in any other way. Besides, hitting him thus on the centre of the body will not "double him up," nor will make him change his leg, as striking him on the flank or shoulder might do. A jockey who punishes a horse about the sheath, or rips his sides with the spurs, is a disgrace to his profession.

During a race, the whip should be held lash down with the hand that holds it on the reins, for if it be kept up, the horse will very probably watch it, expecting a cut every moment, and his attention will thereby be distracted from his work. When the moment comes to use the whip, it should be quickly "picked up," in the manner described on the next and succeeding pages, while the reins are grasped firmly in the other hand ; the rider should sit well down in his saddle, keep his shoulders square, lean back, draw his feet back, and keep his body as steady as possible, so that it may not get any sway from the arm, which might interfere with the motion of the horse, and thus jeopardize his chance of winning.

If the whip is to be used by the right hand, the left hand—of course supposing that both hands are on the reins, see Fig. 3—should let go the slack of the off rein, should then slide forward on the near rein, and grasp the off rein in the full of the hand, as shown in Fig. 9. The left hand should go forward in a some-

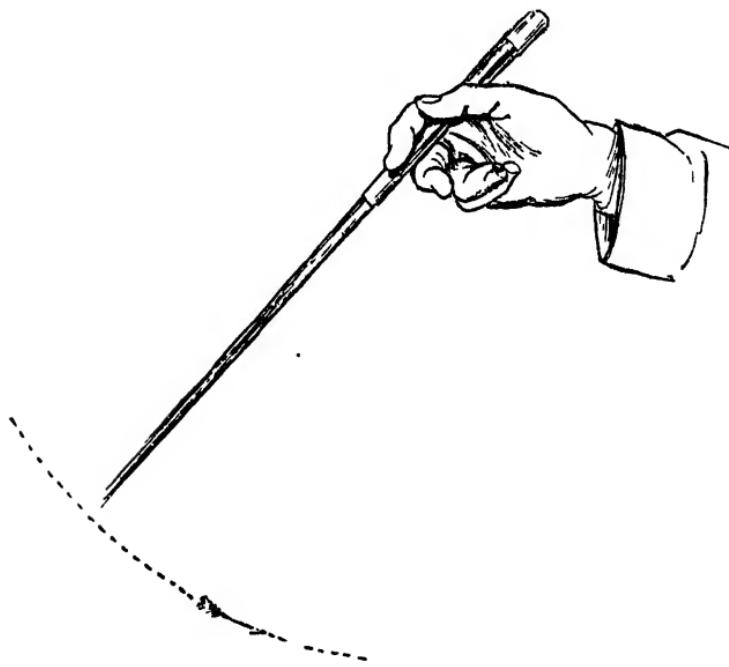
Fig. 9.



what circular manner, and not directly to the front, so that a perfectly even feeling on both reins may be preserved the whole time. It is necessary to shorten the reins in this way, for, when catching hold of a horse's head with one hand, the reins should naturally be shorter than when they are held in both hands. Both reins being now grasped in the left hand, the right hand,

which holds the whip, quits them, and swings the whip slightly forward, so as to bring it between the first and second fingers: see Fig. 10. The whip is now quickly swung round to the rear and brought up into the position

Fig. 10.

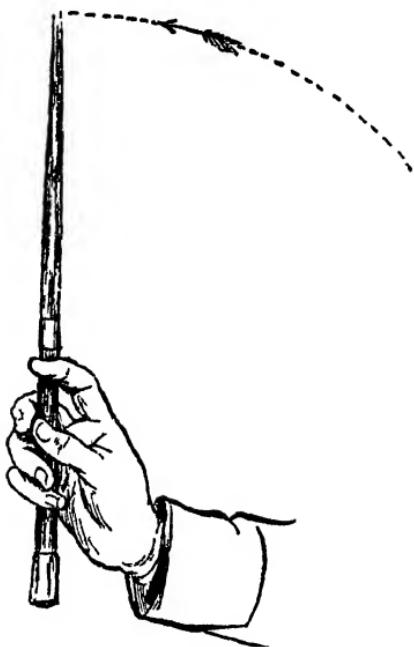


shown in Fig. 11. The first finger slips round the handle of the whip, which is then caught firmly in the hand, and the cuts, which should rarely exceed two or three, are given straight down behind the leg, without

any backward swing. The cuts should be timed so that the horse may be struck, just as his hind legs make their stroke.

Though explaining how to change the reins and pick

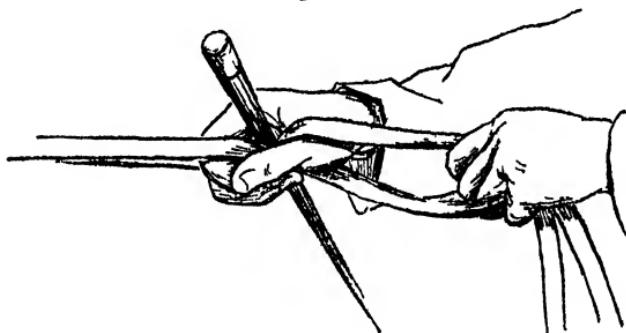
Fig. II.



up the whip has occupied some space, these actions can be performed, after a little practice, with the utmost rapidity. The moment for using the whip is such a critical one, that it is essential a well-practised method

be adopted, so that the rider may run no chance of making a fatal muddle with the reins. Such mistakes, which would appear to be hardly excusable in an amateur, are not unfrequently committed by professionals who fancy themselves not a little. How often do we see jockeys "let go the reins" the moment they use the whip. It always strikes me, that the reason they commit this unpardonable error, is that they do

Fig. 12.

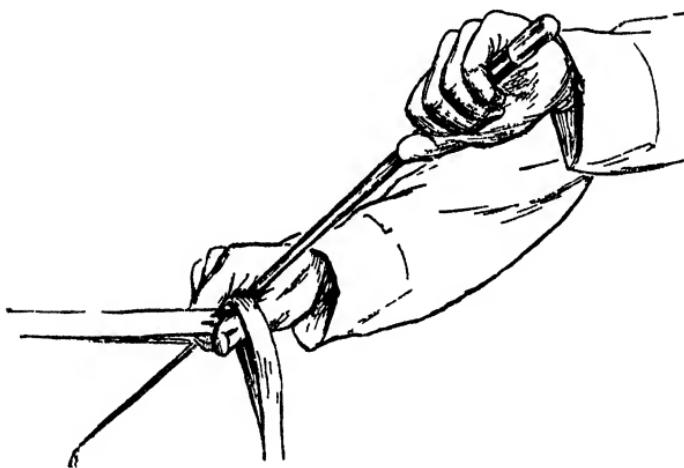


not slide the bridle hand forward to shorten the reins before the whip hand quits them, as ought to be done. When there is little time to act and none to think, the mere knowledge of the proper method of doing a thing cannot be utilised. An action, however, which has been sufficiently often repeated to become automatic (forgive me the word), will be instinctively performed

without the necessity of reflection, on our senses receiving the required signal.

When the whip has to be changed from the right to the left hand, the former should grasp the reins in front of the latter, in the manner before described,

Fig. 13.



see Fig. 12; the left hand should now quit the reins, seize the whip (see Fig. 13), and draw it through the right hand.

A novice should not use a whip, for none but a good rider can sit still, hold his horse together with one hand, and flog at the same time. Though spurs do not present

these difficulties, they are much less efficient than a whip in the hand of a "workman."

Effect of Punishment on Horses.—Without wishing to be "hard" on a very meritorious class of men, I must say that a large number of horses are annually ruined for life by needless punishment. Jockeys are apt to attach too much weight to the opinion of the public, and consequently often "ride a horse out" rather than ease him, when pursuit is hopeless.

Though the view backers take of "cutting a horse to pieces" is very different to the one held by a humane owner, still it is a difficult point to decide whether a jockey is always justified in punishing a horse to the utmost of his power, if he thinks that by so doing he has any chance of winning. If he knows that he has no chance, and persists in using whip and spur, he ought never to get another mount. Regarding the matter as an owner and racing man, I hold that a jockey should not "knock about" a young promising horse or valuable old one, for an unimportant event, on a mere off chance of winning. He should be most particular not to "squeeze" one which has any suspicion of jadiness. Though it is too much to expect that a jockey should take a sentimental view of punishment, still he ought to regard the interests

of his employer, within honourable limits, and should be averse to ruin the noble animal by whose exertions he earns his bread. The most forcible argument I can use against punishment is that, in nine cases out of ten, it defeats its own object.



TOM CANNON.

CHAPTER IV.

STEEPLECHASE RIDING.

BEFORE riding a chase, the jockey should go round and carefully examine the course, if it is strange to him, in order to find out the easiest and safest parts of the fences, which knowledge may be most useful to him when his horse is tired ; to mark where the "taking off" and "landing" is soundest ; and to observe the nature of the ground, so that he may know when to go fast, where the "going" is good, when to take a pull at his horse, where it is heavy, or where, as may occur over a natural line of country, he may make a slight detour with advantage.

He should, above all things, make up his mind to go straight, and should never allow his horse the chance of even trying to refuse. If he knows that his mount is incapable of making a wilful mistake, he should merely regulate the pace, and should, on no account, interfere

with his fencing ; for a pull at his mouth, or a touch of the whip or spurs, at a critical moment, can only tend to make him shorten or lengthen his stride, and, consequently, to blunder. If the horse be dangerously impetuous, he should "drop his hands," speak soothingly to him, and sit as still as possible. If he be liable to chance his fences, and not jump big enough, the jockey should take a good hold of his head and should rouse him when approaching them. He should, however, avoid, unless obliged to do so, hitting the horse with the whip when in the act of jumping, as the sight of it is apt to distract his attention, and may make him blunder over the fence, or to refuse, which he can easily do when the rider has only one hand on the reins. Pressure of the legs and the voice should always be used as a stimulus in preference to the spurs, and the spurs to the whip. It sometimes happens, however, that in the last stride we instinctively feel that the horse is not going to jump big enough, whereupon our heels close, or our whip comes down in response to the thought which flashes in a moment through our brain. These instinctive impulses very rarely lead the experienced rider into error. They are the results of long practice. The jockey should not allow a horse which is liable to refuse, to imagine that he may do so with

impunity, because the rider sits quietly and appears to trust to his honour, for although all horses know when their rider funks, some of them often seem to assume that he does so when such is not really the case. Most horses jump best when they are steadied a little, say about forty or fifty yards from their fences, and are then allowed to go their own pace at them. I am, of course, here referring to steeplechasing, and not about crossing country on occasions when the horseman can take his own time.

The horse's head should never be let loose, while an extra pull should be taken on the reins, when going through heavy ground, so as to make him shorten his stride.

The rider should endeavour, as a rule, to get away in front for the first couple of fences. He will thus avoid being jostled, or "carried out," by any determined refusers which may happen to start; he will also have a clear view of his country, instead of its being obscured by a crowd in front of him. As the first two or three fences are generally low and easy, there is little risk in racing at them on a fresh horse, which, if he has any pretensions to the name of a steeplechaser, ought to permit this small liberty to be taken with him. When the rider finds his road is clear, he may settle down and

ride as he thinks fit. If the ground is dusty, as so often happens in India, it is all important to get well away at the drop of the flag.

A jockey should take his own line, and should not ride close in the track of any other horse, for, if he does so, he will, in the event of his leader making a mistake, run a great risk of coming to grief, with the off chance of jumping on and perhaps killing his man.

Besides that, his horse will not be able to see his fences properly if he has another right in front of him. If the rider is on a horse which has a fine turn of speed, but is one that requires a lead, he may keep thirty or forty yards behind any clever fencer which is going fast enough.

The jockey may stand in his stirrups between the fences, so as to give the utmost freedom to the horse's loins and hind quarters, in which lie the propelling power, but should sit down in his saddle when he approaches them; for if the horse makes a blunder when the rider is leaning forward, the animal is much more liable to come down and the rider to come off, than they would be were the weight not on the horse's fore legs.

Unless the field are racing very fast, the jockey

should moderate his pace somewhat when going at high fences. Of course he should go fast at water, so as to be able to clear it with ease, but he should be most careful to ride the horse up to his bit, and get his hind quarters well under him by the pressure of his legs, and, if need be, by a touch of the spurs, so that the horse may not overjump himself, but shall land and get away again in his stride. Of the two faults it is better to go too slow, with the horse properly in hand, than very fast, with a loose rein, at water.

A man should avoid, if he can, riding a little, say half a length, behind an opponent that is alongside him in a chase, when nearing a fence; for in such a case, the horse will be very apt to "take off" at the same instant the other does so, and, consequently to jump too soon. When galloping side by side, horses seem to like going stride for stride with each other. Besides this, the one that is a little behind may pay more attention to looking at his adversary than at his fence. I have seen, on different occasions, horses come to grief in this manner, and also from an opponent, who has a slight lead, "rushing them" at their jumps with the intention of thus bringing them down.

If a horse be alongside one in a chase, it is usually

much better to have him on one's near side than on the off; for if horses refuse, they generally do so to the left, the cause for this often being the injudicious use of the whip on some previous occasion. Besides this, horses are led, handled and mounted more on the near than on the off side, which naturally makes them turn more readily to it. With a horse on the near side, when coming to a fence, one escapes to a great measure the risk of his running into one, while having him there may prevent one's own horse refusing if he be that way inclined. When riding a horse which is at all inclined to run out, one may with advantage carry the whip in the hand to which he shows a tendency to refuse.

Stirrup leathers for riding across country should generally be a hole or two shorter than for the flat.

The remarks I have made on flat race riding apply, within certain limits, equally well to chasing.

CHAPTER V.

WASTING FOR RACE RIDING.

MEN waste for riding, either to keep down their weight for a considerable time, as jockeys have to do during the racing season, or for one particular race or meeting. In the first case, a man should chiefly rely on abstinence in the matter of food and drink, and exercise, as physic and heavy sweats continued for a long time would destroy his strength and nerve. In training, the diet should be limited to fresh meat, boiled, grilled, or roast—on no account stewed or fried—plain boiled fish without sauce, dry biscuit, toast, and stale bread, with a small variety of vegetables that do not put up weight, such as onions, which are particularly useful in this respect, but on no account should sauce or butter be used with them. Salt ought to be the only condiment allowed. Jockeys generally confine themselves to cold meat and biscuit, which food palls quickly on their appetite.

Potatoes, broad beans, peas, rice, butter, milk, fat of every kind, soups, puddings, sugar, sweets, stews, minces, and everything containing an excess of fat, sugar or starch, should be carefully avoided. It is a well-known fact, that to keep in good health one should eat daily a certain proportion of vegetables, in order that certain salts contained in them may be furnished to the system. By cooking, a large proportion of these salts being lost, a man in training should eat every day, so as to obviate the necessity of consuming a large bulk, a small quantity of lettuces, raw tomatoes, onions, celery, cucumber, radishes or cress, or in their place a little fresh fruit, with the exception of those which contain much sugar or starchy matter.

When wasting, one should avoid eating large quantities of meat; for doing so produces great languor and depression. "The first effect of an excessive meat diet is not that of increased strength, but rather a feeling of heaviness and weariness in the muscles, with nervous excitation often rising to sleeplessness, which he [Ranke] attributes to the accumulation in the blood of the alkaline salts of the meat" (Carpenter).

The drink should be restricted to water, weak tea

without milk or sugar, light claret and water, or very weak spirits-and-water. The weaker these are taken, the better ; for tea, coffee, and alcohol check waste of tissue. A man in strict training will find it judicious not to drink aerated waters, for they are so refreshing that it is hard to resist taking more than is advisable. As fluid of any sort puts up weight, a man should only drink that kind of which a little will quench thirst. I need hardly say that the less spirits a man takes, the steadier will be his nerves. If this regimen be strictly adhered to, the jockey need do nothing further than to take lots of exercise. By this I mean that he should not flinch from doing a twenty or a twenty-five mile walk. Riding four or five training gallops every morning will get a man fitter than anything I know ; but as this is a luxury in which heavy weights cannot indulge, they ought to walk, play racquets, lawn tennis, or cricket, and take all the healthy exercise they can get, whether on horseback or on foot, short of going in for regular sweats. A saline draught may be necessary now and then. Lamplough's pyretic saline or Eno's fruit salt is probably the most agreeable laxative, though Epsom salts are by far the most effectual aperient for getting off weight.

The following would be about the correct style of daily food: A steak or a couple of chops—done on the gridiron, but not in the fryingpan—a couple of slices of stale bread, or dry crisp toast, a few plain boiled onions, a bunch of radishes or cress, a stick of celery, or a couple of tomatoes, and a cup of tea, with a very little milk and without sugar, for breakfast. A slice or two of cold meat, a hard biscuit, and a glass of water for lunch. A couple of slices from a joint, plain boiled onions, a biscuit, a stick of celery, and half a pint of claret with water for dinner. By pursuing this system, with plenty of ordinary exercise, a man, in a month or so, will gradually get down to within 5 or 6 lbs. of his lightest riding weight, which, if required, can be attained by a couple of sweats and a dose of physic.

I am glad to find that John Osborne and Edwin Martin advocate the system of long quick walks without sweaters, and strict moderation in food without actual Banting, in preference to that of violent purgatives and heavy sweats. Both have repeatedly got off 28 lbs. in a fortnight or three weeks, and felt all the better for it. Regular sweats depress a man so much, and make him so nervous, that he cannot continue

taking them, in an effectual manner, for a lengthened period. A jockey will find that after taking off 5 or 6 lbs. by a single sweat, he will put it nearly all on again by eating even a very moderate meal. The first few long walks will not take much weight off; but, if they be continued, they will rapidly waste off his superfluous flesh. The system of long walks and abstinence as regards food, requires so much fixity of purpose and self-denial, that it is easy to imagine how unpopular it is among so-called fashionable jockeys. If an aperient be required, the jockey may put, as Edwin Martin used to do, a teaspoonful of Epsom salts in half a cup of warm tea, which should be drunk and then followed by the remaining half-cupful. This will produce an excellent effect without injury to the health.

But if a man is too lazy to walk and fast, he may Bant, though he should dispense with his frugal lunch, and eat and drink as little as he can manage to do with at breakfast and dinner. The training may commence with a strong dose of physic, say three Cockle's pills at night and an ounce of Epsom salts next morning. On that day, nothing beyond a quiet walk should be done; but on the next and succeeding days

he should take a sweat, and about every third day an ounce of salts the first thing in the morning. On the day physic is taken, a walk without sweaters will be enough. The sweat should be arranged in something of the following fashion: a pair of long knickerbocker stockings, over which a pair of thick worsted ones and a pair of boots for the feet; three long drawers of "yellow sweating flannel"—which is made for the purpose—and a pair of trousers; or, if these sweating drawers be not available, a pair of drawers and a couple of pairs of thick cloth trowsers, for the legs; four yellow flannel body sweaters, or their equivalent in flannel shirts, with a waistcoat or two, a shooting coat and a greatcoat for the body; a pair of warm gloves for the hands, a large woollen comforter wrapped round and round the neck, and a couple of large cloth caps pulled down over the ears, will do as far as clothing is concerned. A pair of thick woollen socks, folded as if they were about to be put on the feet, are a capital substitute for gloves. Great care should be taken that every part be protected from the air, for, if even the hands or neck be left bare, perspiration will be materially checked. With this amount of clothes, on a warm day, most men will find that a sharp walk

of eight miles will be as much as they can do without overtaxing their strength. One should arrange, if possible, so as to have the wind at one's back when returning home. The walk being finished, the man in training should lie down with a lot of rugs heaped over him, and remain thus as long as he can, which usually will not be more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. During this time, the heavy oppressed feeling about the heart is most trying.

After the rugs and clothes are taken off, the man should be quickly dried, and then have a warm bath, after which he may have a cold douche if his liver be in good order. He should not dress until he is thoroughly cool, and ought to forbear taking anything to drink as long as he possibly can after a sweat, for the more heated the body is, the more rapidly will it absorb fluid.

In India and in other hot climates, a man cannot walk in clothing much more than half the distance he could accomplish in England, under similar circumstances.

If a man has hacks to ride, and is unable to walk, he can take a sweat on horseback by putting on clothes as described, and then going for a sharp ride; but this,

though pleasanter, will not be as effective practice as walking.

A sweat, like that I have described, will take from 4 lbs. to 6 lbs. off an ordinary man, provided that there be little or no wind, which most materially prevents perspiration. When taking a sweat in hot climates, one should avoid the sun as much as possible, for few things tend to make one so nervous, as hard exercise when exposed to its influence. Having one's nerves in good order is of far more consequence, than being able to get the exact weight. This particularly applies to men who ride their own horses, for jockeys have little option in the matter, owners being often foolishly exacting on this point. I am quite certain that, on the flat, a jockey can ride quite five pounds better when he is fit and well, than he can when he is weak from wasting; while in steeplechasing the difference is one of stones and not of pounds.

A lamp bath is often taken instead of a regular sweat, if the man in training be lazy, or not able to walk well. It is arranged thus: a lamp for the purpose, or three or four small saucers full of oil with lighted cotton wicks in them, are placed under a chair on which the man sits. It is well to have the seat of the chair made of wood,

and its under surface covered with zinc, or tin, which will prevent it from being burned, and will also radiate the heat. He should have no clothes on, but should have several rugs and blankets wrapped round the chair and himself, and brought tight under it, so that the heated air may not escape. A waterproof sheet considerably assists this operation. A little practice is required to teach one how to get the rugs and blankets fixed. If the hot air be properly kept in, the person taking this bath will, in about ten minutes, break out into a profuse perspiration. He may continue in this state for an hour, which will be as long as most men can bear. A portable Turkish bath may be used.

A lamp bath will take little more than half the weight off that a regular sweat will do, for its action is confined to the pores of the skin alone, while in the other, there is a general waste of the body, the lungs aiding very largely in carrying off the *débris*. When walking, waste of tissue rapidly takes place by reason of the blood-vessels of the lungs taking up an increased supply of oxygen, which is then carried through the system and is utilised for removing the carbon of the broken-up material in the form of carbonic acid, which is exhaled from the lungs into the atmosphere. By this process

the blood is kept pure. Under the influence of a lamp bath, the action of the heart, after a short time, becomes tumultuous, and the breathing laboured, on account of the lungs becoming gorged with impure blood, till at last faintness and marked distress may ensue. By persisting in these sweats, the heart is very liable to become permanently injured.

I have described wasting and Banting from a jockey's point of view, though I am well aware how injurious they are to health, which cannot be maintained, under ordinary conditions, without the consumption of a due proportion of fat or oil, and starch or sugar in the food along with an adequate supply of fresh vegetables. I would strongly advise any of my readers who, being inclined to put up weight, may wish to keep it permanently down, on no account to Bant, but to take lots of hard exercise, and to substitute for the usual dinner a light meal consisting of a little cold lean meat, and some plain vegetables. This, with an ordinary breakfast at about 10 A.M., and a cup of tea and a slice of toast first thing in the morning, will be enough for any healthy man to keep "fit" on. Beer, butter, stews, fat of all kinds, and pastry should be avoided.

I need hardly say, that any mode of wasting, however good, must prove injurious if carried to excess or continued for a long period. The quicker weight is got off, under judicious conditions, and the sooner the system is allowed to return to its natural healthy state, the less strain will it experience from wasting.

The more a man trusts to *hard exercise and self-denial*, the "fitter" will he be to ride; while Banting, sweats, and physic should only be employed when time is limited, or the amount to be got off is considerable, and the notice very short.

A man in training should weigh himself every day to see how the process of wasting proceeds. A Salter's spring balance, noting $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. up to 200 lbs., is a cheap and portable machine for the purpose.

A man can ride in a light saddle (of 2 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.) about 5 lbs. less than what he will weigh in ordinary clothes.

If a jockey be at all in hard condition, he need allow nothing for wasting during a race on a hot day, for the horse will sweat as much into the saddle cloth or pannel, as the jockey is likely to lose.

The following is a safe rule to adopt for weighing out before a race. Everything, including the bridle, being

in the scales, put $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. on the opposite side, and if the jockey can draw his weight with this $\frac{1}{2}$ lb., he is quite safe.

Weighing before a race is called "weighing out," and after a race it is termed "weighing in."





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CHAPTER VI.

LADIES' RIDING.

A Lady's Horse—Riding Gear—Holding the Reins and Whip—How to Mount—“Hands”—How to Dismount—The Rider's Dress.

As the object of this book is to teach the theory and practice of riding in a “workmanlike” manner, I shall not touch on the artificial rules and varying fashions of park or school equitation, but shall devote my space to the special points of horsemanship which concern ladies, and which hold good for all time.

A Lady's Horse.—The question of man or woman being able to ride and control a horse, supposing him to be properly bitted and saddled, resolves itself into the more or less perfect possession by the rider of the following requisites: good hands; strong seat; firm nerves; even temper, and physical strength. If a lady lack somewhat the last-mentioned gift, she amply makes up for the deficiency by a tightness of grip unobtainable

in a man's saddle ; while it is but bare justice to say that in touch, courage, and patience she is at least our equal. Mere brute force has little to do with the capability of holding a puller. We need no better proof of this than to see the admirable manner in which a clever 5 st. 7 lbs. lad can hold an impetuous thoroughbred at exercise, or on the race-course, in a plain snaffle, which beats a 12 st. athlete, were he but a moderate horseman, might be quite incapable of doing. Ladies who have had equal opportunities, with men, of learning, ride quite as well as they. But, as a rule, they don't get the chance of excelling, nor are they "set right" by unpalatable home truths being told them without favour or affection, unless, indeed, they have hard-riding, and, may be, jealous brothers. The fact of a lady having to ride in a side saddle subjects her to three disadvantages : she is unable, without assistance, to mount as readily as a man ; she cannot apply pressure of the leg to the horse's right side ; and she cannot "drop her hands" in order to pull her horse together to the same extent as he can. The judicious use of the whip or hunting crop may partly make up for the absence of leg pressure on the off side. A fine horsewoman, therefore, may be satisfied with any horse which is fit for a man, provided

he is fairly steady to mount, goes up to his bit, and does not require an unusual amount of "collecting." I have the pleasure of knowing several ladies who could ride anything that has ever been foaled, yet it is not desirable, even with one of them, to have a horse "dance about" when he is being mounted, or one which "sprawls all over the place" and requires constant pulling together, when the rider is up.

The ordinary lady rider ought to have a horse which is perfectly steady to mount; is light in hand; goes in a natural collected manner, and is safe and easy to ride. He should not be rough or high in his action, lest he might fatigue her unnecessarily. All ladies, except those who are nervous, like light-hearted showy horses, though, unless they are really good riders, they naturally desire the fire and gaiety to be well under control. The plucky, hard-riding sort love to steer horses which other ladies would be "afraid of their lives" to mount.

Timid ladies, or those who are just beginning to learn, should be put only on animals which are perfectly steady in every respect, easy in their paces, and which will allow their mouths to be pulled about, without resenting the interference, or getting out of hand in the slightest.

If such a horse be rather "woodeny" in his paces, no fault should be found with him on that account.

In order to give plenty of room for the saddle, a lady's horse may be longer in the back than would be desirable in one for a man. He should be quite 21 lbs., taken from a man's point of view, above the weight he has to carry, as extra fatigue is entailed on him by the rider having to sit so far back. The side position naturally causes an unequal distribution of weight. Besides this, a lady cannot ease her horse by standing in the stirrups or getting off and on as a man may often do during a long ride. The far back position of the seat, however, enables a lady to ride a horse which is uncertain on his fore legs better than a man can do.

A lady's horse may, with advantage, have a fairly high forehand, so that the saddle may not shift forward, and that he may not jolt his rider too much.

The style of horse should, if possible, be in thorough keeping with the style of rider. A young lady with a slight pretty figure will look best on a horse which is all blood and quality; while a portly and dignified matron will be best suited with one of the weight-carrying hunter stamp. 15.1 is a nice height for a horse to carry a lady five feet high. We may add an inch in

height for the horse, for every four inches by which the lady exceeds five feet.

Grey horses are objectionable for ladies, as the hair which comes off their bodies shows very much on the habit. Besides this, they are difficult to be kept clean.

Geldings are always preferable for ladies to either mares or horses. The former are especially objectionable in India, the latter in England.

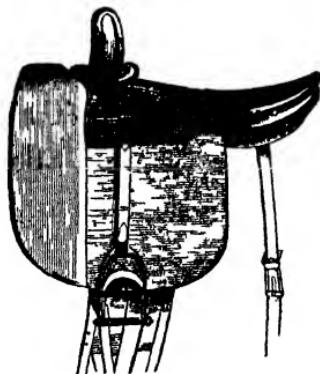
Riding Gear.—The side saddle has, as we all know, a near pommel, over which the rider places her right leg, and a third crutch (or leaping head) for her left leg to press against, while the old-fashioned off pommel should be altogether wanting, or cut so low as not to interfere with the lady lowering her hand when she is holding the reins. Its absence favours her chance of falling clear in the event of her horse coming down. The third crutch should be placed so that it may press against that part of the rider's leg which is about three inches above the knee. It ought to be sufficiently separated from the pommel to afford, along with it, a firm purchase to the rider. The shorter the rider's limb, the nearer ought the third crutch to be placed to the pommel. If the two be wide apart from each other, a rider whose limb is short will probably be able to

touch the third crutch with only the point of her left knee, and will consequently have a very insecure seat in such a saddle. The third crutch may be made immovable; may screw in and out; or may be attached to the tree by a hinge, so as fold down when required, as proposed by Mr. Lennan, the eminent Dublin saddler. This arrangement, although it may possibly be weaker, is quite as convenient as that of the screw, for facilitating the packing or putting away of the saddle, and does not, like the other, possess the disadvantage of being liable to work loose. It may possibly be safer in case of a fall. When the crutch is movable, the screw, unless it be thick, and the thread particularly deep, is apt to work loose, when it will prove most inconvenient and uncomfortable. The crutch should never be unscrewed, except at rare intervals to clean and oil it. Many ladies consider it a great advantage to be able to change the angle of the crutch a little so as to ease the leg during a long ride, and hence prefer the screw arrangement, which is convenient when more than one lady uses a saddle, as the same angle for the crutch will not suit all riders. The crutch should be only sufficiently long to give a firm bearing for the leg, and should be but slightly curved, except

just towards the end, which may be turned-in a little. A long crooked crutch is very dangerous in case of a fall.

The *seat of the saddle* should be level, and be without any hollowing-out, in order to avoid an unpleasant drag on the rider's right leg ; while the shape of the tree should be regulated so that it may have a correct bearing along the muscles of the back, and to obviate the

Fig. 14.



risk of its end touching the backbone—an unpleasant contingency which frequently occurs with common-made saddles. When the saddle, as it is often made to do, rises too much in front, or when the tree is too short and flat, the cantle, in the gallop or canter, is forced downwards and backwards, so that the skin, just behind the saddle, is liable to be rumpled and bruised at each stride,

a sore back being the result in a short time. Owing to the shape of the horse's back, it is all but impossible to have the seat quite horizontal, when girthed up.

Though the greatest care should be taken to prevent the possibility of the gullet plate (the iron arch at the pommel) touching the withers, as long as there is sufficient space left to prevent such an accident, there is no need to have the pommel tilted up more than can be helped. The saddle should maintain its position by the proper shape of the tree, and not by stuffing, the presence of which is simply a necessary evil to save the back from becoming chafed. The less stuffing employed, the less tendency will the saddle have to shift its position. The saddle should be amply long for the rider, both to ensure a proper distribution of weight, and also to prevent a galled back. The "points" of the tree should fit closely to the horse's sides—just behind the shoulderblades—so as to prevent any "wobbling" of the saddle. Ladies generally find it convenient to have the seat on the near side eased off so as to allow the rider's left leg to get close to the horse. Timid or unpractised riders may have the seats of their saddles quilted, or covered with buckskin. Any ornamental stitching about a saddle certainly detracts from its workmanlike ap-

pearance. The off flap need not be larger than that of a man's hunting saddle. It may have a pocket for the sandwich case, and D's for straps to attach the tightly-rolled *covert-coat*, which might be made waterproof.

I do not believe that a thoroughly serviceable side saddle, which is big enough for an ordinary sized lady, can be made "all complete" at a less weight than 18 lbs.

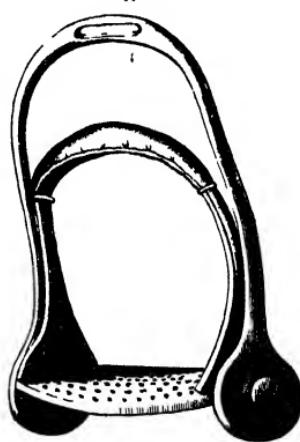
The *stirrup leather* may be attached to the near side by a spring bar, similar to the one used for men's saddles, or it may pass over a roller bar on the near side, and be attached to a leather girth which is buckled on to a strap on the off side in reach of the lady's hand when she is on horseback. The spring bar arrangement possesses the advantages of safety—always supposing that the lock is kept open, or, at least, well oiled—simplicity, and of not requiring the leather to be altered in length for different horses, or for the same horse when he gets a little slack in his girth from work. The other plan allows the rider to arrange her stirrup, as she wishes, after she has got on, to change the length when she likes, and makes her independent of anyone's assistance, if, having a mount in a strange saddle, she finds she has not got the proper length. It serves the purpose of a surcingle in keeping

the flaps down. It will also enable the lady to mount without any assistance, if she lets out the stirrup to its full length, and then shortens it when she is in the saddle. I fail to see the advantage, from a mechanical point of view, of the "balance strap," except the very doubtful one of squeezing the horse's side when the rider puts her weight on the stirrup, which must tend to

Fig. 15.



Fig. 16.



make the animal unsteady. I find, as a rule, that ladies like the roller bar arrangement better than the other, perhaps, because few have tried the spring-bar plan advocated by Colonel Greenwood.

The *stirrup iron* may be made to open at the side (Fig. 15); have one side completely removed; be simply a

gentleman's ordinary hunting stirrup ; or be of the Latchford (Fig. 16) shape, which consists of two stirrups of unequal size, one within the other ; the small one, in which the foot is placed, being made to free itself from the other on the slightest backward drag of the foot, in the event of the rider being thrown, provided, always, that the mechanism is kept well oiled. Padding placed round the stirrup is unnecessary, as a lady should not put her foot "home," so cannot hurt her instep against the iron, while it may possibly prove dangerous by causing the foot to catch in the stirrup. Colonel Greenwood remarks that "the lady's stirrup iron should be in all respects the same as a man's, and, to make assurance doubly sure, it should open at the side with a spring. This might be useful in case of a fall on the off side, when the action of the spring-bar of the saddle might be impeded. But if the stirrup is large and heavy, it is next to impossible that the foot should be caught by it. It is the common error to suppose that persons are dragged owing to the stirrup being too large and the foot passing through it ; but the reason is its being too small and light ; it then sticks to the foot, and clasps it by the pressure of the upper part of the stirrup above the foot, and the lower part on the sole of the foot "

I observe that Mrs. Power O'Donoghue (Nannic Lambert) in her admirable articles on ladies' riding in 'The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News,' advocates the use of a man's stirrup for ladies. Any mechanical arrangement which the stirrup may possess should be kept clean and carefully oiled, so that there may not be the slightest chance of its not working properly at any critical moment.

A *saddle-cloth* should be used to keep the pannel clean and to prevent it getting damp and caked from sweat. A thick one should on no account be employed, except to prevent a sore back, as its presence will increase the tendency which side saddles have of wobbling and shifting their position. A leather saddle-cloth is thin, sweat-proof, never gets hard, if constantly used, looks well, affords admirable protection to the back, and lasts for years.

As a rule the *bit and bridoon* (curb and snaffle) bridle is the best one for a lady, as she may use the snaffle alone if she likes, and have the curb in reserve for an emergency. The reins may be somewhat narrower than those which are suitable for the larger hands of a man. With this exception, there need be no difference made between the headgear of the lady's and gentleman's horse.

The question whether severely plain gear, or fancy and ornamental trappings, best become the horse, does not concern us here, so long as none of the rules of horsemanship are violated. A neatly coloured brow-band can hardly be out of place. Personally, I like horses and their appointments to look as if they were intended for work rather than show. I cannot see the use or beauty of round reins, ornamentally curved cheek-pieces, noseband fringes, and suchlike articles of bridle millinery.

A *running martingale* that makes the pull of the reins to be about on a level with the top of the withers, will generally be an assistance to the rider, who is forced by her position to hold her hands higher than they ought to be, were she riding *à la chevalier*, unless, indeed, the horse carries his head too low.

If the horse makes a practice of stargazing or chucking up his head, a *standing martingale* may be used with advantage (see page 234). Some horses will require a *breastplate* to prevent the saddle working back.

The side saddle should be placed just clear of the "play" of the horse's shoulderblades, and should be girthed up one or two holes tighter than would be necessary for a man's saddle, as a lady, however straight she may hold

herself, can hardly avoid putting more weight on one side—the near—than on the other; besides that, she cannot help to keep the saddle in its place by the grip of the legs, as a man can. The leather surcingle, being hard and inelastic, should on no account be buckled tightly.

Before mounting, the rider might run her eye over the following “points:” that the mouthpiece of the bit (see p. 230) is just clear of the tushes of the horse, or about an inch above the corner nippers of the mare; the curbchain the proper length; the lipstrap on; that the snaffle does not wrinkle the corners of the mouth; that the throat latch is loose enough; the running martingale sufficiently long to have the pull of the reins on a line with the top of the withers; standing martingale, if it be used, proper length; saddle just clear of the play of the shoulders; girths tight; and surcingle looser than the girths.

The leather work of the saddle and bridle should be clean and soft, the stitches clearly defined, and not clogged up by grease or dirt; while no stain should be left on a white pocket-handkerchief, or kid glove, if it be passed over any portion of the leather. Beeswax should not be employed to give the saddle a polish, as it makes it very “sticky.” Nothing but soap should be

used, except, perhaps, a little saddle dressing once a month. The steel work should of course be kept bright.

Holding the Reins and Whip.—I strongly advise ladies to hold their reins “crossed” in the manner adopted by all jockeys and good cross-country riders. This plan gives them an amount of power over their horse which is unattainable by any other method. I venture to propose the following modification of the “crossed” rein style, which may be found very convenient for riders with small hands, whose fingers *bien gantés* would be incommoded by the reins passing through them. If the lady wishes to ride on one rein only, she may hold it in her left hand crossed as in the accompanying sketch ; while she may hook up the other rein on her middle finger, and let it loose or draw it up. If she wishes to ride equally on both reins, she may treat the two as one. If she wants to ride on one only, she may loop the other up by a slipknot (see Fig. 8, page 10), and hold her reins in the manner shown on page 1. The method of holding the reins with both hands is shown on pages 3 and 5.

I would advise all beginners to make a practice of riding with both hands on the reins. It helps them to

hold themselves straight, and is more effective, in every way, than one-handed riding.

When the left hand only is used, the right may hang straight, but loosely, down.

As a lady requires her whip, more to press the horse up to his bit, and to prevent his hind quarters swinging round to the right, when he is turned to the left, than to punish him, the whip she carries should be stiff, though light. The old-fashioned toy lady's whip, is quite out of place in the hands of a good rider. Being much heavier at one end than the other, it is an awkward and ill-balanced affair. A light crop, for the lady who hunts, to open gates, etc., or a small cane, is preferable to it in every way. If a lady requires a whip for a sluggish horse, she might use a light racing one. I would recommend it to be made quite plain, and with a deep rim made of whipcord at the butt end to prevent it slipping through the fingers. It is usually held with the thin end pointing up, though some ladies, perhaps not without reason, think it more workmanlike to carry it in the way a jockey does his whip. If they do so, I would advise them to learn to "pick it up" in the manner described on page 122.

When using the whip, the rider should cut straight

down, and as close behind the girth as possible (see page 120).

How to Mount.—A lady may mount her horse in the following ways :

1. The groom should stand in front of the horse, and should keep his head up by holding the snaffle reins, one in each hand, close to the rings. He ought, on no account, to hold the bit reins, lest an accident might happen, from the curb hurting the mouth. If there be no snaffle, the cheekpieces of the headstall of the curb should be held. With a strange or uncertain-tempered horse, it is best for the lady to approach him from his "left front." If he be very fidgety, and a wall or hedge be near, he might be put close up against it, so that he may not get away. Having arrived alongside her mount, she should stand just behind his near fore leg, close to, though not touching him, and facing to the front, at right angles to his side. She now takes the whip and reins in her right hand, and lightly feels the horse's mouth with the snaffle reins, while her hand rests on the pommel. If the horse has a tender mouth, the reins ought to be held quite slack. She then raises her left foot about twelve inches from the ground, keeping it in a vertical line with her shoulder, and not advancing it in any way.

At the same time she lifts up the skirt of her habit with her left hand. The gentleman who is to assist her to mount, bends down and takes her foot in the palms of both hands, while she places her left hand, arm straight, on his right shoulder. In order to mount, she has simply to straighten her left leg and stand on the gentleman's hands, while keeping her balance with her right hand on the pommel and her left on his shoulder. He will then be able to raise her, with the utmost ease, to a sitting position on the saddle. The interval between the moment she straightens her knee, and when he begins to raise her, is almost imperceptible if the lady is properly put on her horse. It is most important for the beginner to understand the system of mounting, which is simplicity itself. Many ladies are rendered saddle-shy (if I may use the term) by gentlemen, who knew nothing about it, having tried, and failed, to put them on their horses on previous occasions. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it has been the man's fault. Perhaps, from knowing no better, or from a desire to show off his strength, he has used only one hand. He may have brought her foot too much forward. Or, worst *bêtise* of all, he may have attempted to raise her before she had straightened her knee and rested her weight on

his hands. I am writing at present as much for gentlemen, as I am for ladies. After a lady, during her early essays, has suffered from clumsy attempts to put her up, it is not to be wondered at if she regards the feat of mounting, as one which requires some peculiar knack to accomplish, while she naturally becomes nervous about attempting it, as failure is so ungraceful. If she has any doubts about her capability to mount easily, she ought to make a few preliminary attempts to stand and support herself for four or five seconds on the gentleman's hands. When she finds that she can do this successfully, she may, when her leg is again straight, give him a signal (or take one from him), to place her on the saddle. If she be very timid, she may practise straightening her knee indoors, with her right hand on the chimneypiece of a room, and her left on a gentleman's shoulder. When the lady has placed her foot on the gentleman's hands, he generally gives the "caution," "one, two," for her to straighten her knee before he raises her. As he lifts her up, she turns her body a little to the left and places herself sideways on the saddle. She then puts her right leg over the pommel, and has her skirt drawn down in front; the right knee should fit exactly into the curved seam made

on purpose in the habit. The skirt should be pulled well down between the right leg and the saddle. If properly cut, it will never "work up," even in jumping, presuming, of course, that the rider sits, as she ought to do, with her right foot well against the horse, and that she does not swing it about. She now places, with the aid of the gentleman, her left foot in the stirrup, as far as the ball of the foot. The gentleman may draw the habit down behind, or, while resting her right hand, with the reins in it, on the pommel, she may rise in the stirrup and smooth down her habit with her left hand. "This act of clearing the slack of the skirt is one which is so frequently necessary for the lady to execute when riding that she should practise it frequently in her early lessons. It is true that when the assistant first places her on the horse he can arrange her habit as she rises from the saddle; but, for some time, until she has acquired firmness and perfect balance, her habit will invariably ride up, particularly in trotting, and it is necessary that she should be independent in this respect of the gentleman who attends her. Moreover, as to arrange the habit gracefully requires considerable practice, it should form a distinct part of the lesson at first when the horse is standing perfectly still, afterwards at a walk,

and finally at a trot. In cantering it cannot be done" (*Vieille Moustache*). The habit being settled, the rider takes up the reins with the left hand, or with both.

If the horse be very steady, the lady may mount in the foregoing manner, even without the help of a groom.

2. If there be no groom present, and the horse requires to be held, the gentleman may do it with the left hand, while he places his right, palm up, on his knee, for the lady to put her foot on. Or he may steady himself and the horse, by holding the reins and the mane in the same manner as if he were going to mount.

3. If the horse be fractious and the gentleman be unaided, or if the lady is quite alone with a steady horse, she may mount from a low wall, chair, etc. If a gentleman be present, he may stand in front of the horse and hold him in the way already described for the groom to do ; or, if the horse shows unwillingness to approach the mounting block, the gentleman may hold the off cheekpiece of the headstall of the bridle with his right hand, and, with the flat of his left hand, prevent the horse from swinging his hind quarters out. When the horse is sufficiently close, the lady should take the whip and reins in her left hand and "feel" the horse's mouth. She should put the left foot in the stirrup, take the

pommel with her left hand, the cantle with the right, and spring lightly between both hands into the saddle. The right leg is then put over the pommel, left foot put into the stirrup, and habit arranged.

4. To get into the saddle from the ground, without the assistance of a gentleman or mounting block, the lady should "let out" the stirrup, as few can reach it without doing so, with an ordinary sized horse. When the stirrup leather buckles on the off side, within reach of the lady's hand, she can readily shorten it when mounted, though she will have difficulty to do so when it is attached to the near side.

A lady friend and accomplished rider writes to me as follows:—"All ladies who hunt ought to be able to mount unassisted, as they are liable to get a fall when no one is close at hand to help them up. It may happen also that from being thrown out, or from some other cause, a lady may have to ride home quite alone after a tiring day. How many ladies I have heard say that they would gladly rest from their one unalterable position in the saddle by walking a mile or so on the way home, were it not for the difficulty of remounting."

The Seat.—The left foot should be placed in the stirrup as far as the ball of the foot, and not "home." The

length of the stirrup should be such as to allow the third crutch to press, without inconvenience, against the left thigh just above the knee, while the left leg, from the knee downwards, should be perpendicular to the ground. It is important that the stirrup be not long, so that, in trotting, the rider may not throw too much weight on the near side. The left foot should be parallel to the horse's side, with its heel slightly lowered, at the walk; but when cantering or galloping, it may be drawn back five or six inches, and its heel well depressed. Nothing looks more ungraceful, or indicates the bad rider more clearly, than the habit, when going fast, of drawing back the leg from the knee downwards, until it is in an almost horizontal position.

The right foot should be drawn back, and its toe raised, so that a good grip may be obtained by the muscles of the calf becoming tense. It should press well against the horse, should be parallel with his shoulder, and should not have any backward and forward sway in trotting. The toe of the boot should never project forward, so as to show against the skirt of the habit.

The rider should sit in the middle of the saddle and as straight as possible. Grace and firmness of seat

cannot be obtained unless she sits *well down*. To do this, she must, while sitting well back, keep her body upright by the play of the hip-joints, and not by hollowing out the small of her back. The waist should be kept quite lissom. Both men and women, when riding, should keep their bodies upright and their shoulders back by the working of the hips. When this is done, the seat of the rider is carried, as much as possible, under the centre of gravity of the body, and not behind it, as would be the case were the small of the back drawn in. The entire body, except the legs, should be free from all stiffness. The shoulders should be kept down and drawn back, and the head raised. Many ladies, in the present day, think it *chic* to turn out their elbows when riding. I must confess that I prefer the old fashion which ruled that daylight should not be seen between a lady's arms and body when she was on horseback. By keeping the elbows "in," the rider has much more power over her animal than by turning them out.

In order to acquire the deservedly admired "square" seat, the lady, when riding, should practise the habit of keeping her eyes fixed in a line between the horse's ears. By doing so, she will also tend to save him from a sore back, which is so often caused by the "drag"

resulting from the rider not sitting square. The two most common faults which prevent ladies holding themselves straight, are : (1) Bringing the right shoulder too much forward ; and (2) sitting too much over on the off side of the saddle, and then leaning over to the near side in order to preserve their balance. This fault is usually practised when the stirrup is too short. If it be too long, an indifferent rider may, when pressing on it, sit too much to the near side, and then lean her body over to the off : a position which will cause a "drag" on the saddle, which, if continued, will soon give the horse a sore back. No weight should be put on the stirrup, except when trotting.

Action of the Hands.—The elbow, or elbows, according as one or both hands are on the reins, should work close to the sides, and be kept back so as to allow the horse a long rein. When both hands are used, they should be held about six inches apart, and just clear of the right knee. The single hand ought to work in a line with the centre of the horse's body, and just clear of the right leg, on which it should not rest. The wrists should be kept loose, and the hands allowed to fall into an easy position with the knuckles at about an angle of forty-five degrees to the ground. The hands,

arms, and body should "give and take" in the order named, with the action of the horse's head. Thus, a slight movement may be restrained by wrist play; while the arms and body may be required to aid the hands in "pulling together" a fractious horse.

As regards the artistic manipulation of the reins I have nothing to add to the remarks made on page 81.

How to Dismount.—A lady may dismount in the following ways:

1. The groom stands in front of the horse and holds his head up by the snaffle reins, close to the rings, or by the cheekpieces of the headstall of the bridle, if a Pelham be used. The gentleman in attendance takes the lady's foot out of the stirrup. She disengages, with the help of her right hand, her right leg and skirt from the pommel, sits sideways on the saddle, advances her hands and rests them on those of the gentleman, who raises his for her to take. She then slides lightly down on to the ground. If the skirt be long, which it ought not to be, she will have to gather it up in her hands before giving them to the gentleman.

2. If no groom be at hand and the horse is unsteady, and apt to kick, the gentleman may stand in front of him and hold him. The lady then passes her reins into the

right hand, catches hold of the mane with it, takes her foot out of the stirrup, clears her right leg of the pommel, and places her left hand on the raised arm or hand of the gentleman, who, shifting his hold of the horse, catches the near cheekpiece of the headstall with his left hand, while he extends his hand to help the lady. She, steadyng herself with both hands, slips down well to the front. If the horse is very unsteady, she may, before dismounting, draw the reins through the right hand while it is on the mane, taking care to have the off rein tighter than the near one, so as to prevent the horse from whipping round to the right when she is descending. A lady cannot get off in this manner, if the horse is, comparatively, a very high one.

3. When the rider has to dismount without any assistance whatsoever, she should take her foot out of the stirrup, remove her right leg from the pommel, place her right hand on the third crutch—which she should turn round if it be movable—and the left hand, which holds the reins, on the pommel. She can now swing herself down, and alight a little to the left front of the horse's near fore leg, while retaining her grip on the reins.

The Rider's Dress.—I am indebted to a few lady

friends for the following remarks on this very important subject.

A lady's riding dress should be as plain as possible, without any floating ends, flyaway ribbons, curls or feathers, and, above all things, no jewellery. If a watch be necessary, it may be attached by a black cord, and hidden away in a watch-pocket at the waistband. The colour of the habit is a matter of choice, though dark shades of blue or of green, or black itself, are considered to be in the best taste. It should, for hunting and work, be of stout rough Melton cloth, so that it may not be torn in the event of charging through a "hairy" gap, or riding fast through a narrow path in covert. In India, and in other hot climates, some suitably thin material may be used. The habit should have no extra cloth, always supposing that the rider is not very stout. Though fitting closely, it should have no feeling or appearance of constraint or stiffness, which would destroy all the graceful look the figure possesses. The *skirt* should, when the rider is mounted, be only just long enough to hide the stirrup and boot, and should have its lower edge in as nearly a horizontal line as possible. If properly made, it will hang, without requiring the dangerous

elastic loop inside through which many ladies thrust the right foot to keep the skirt down. If really well made, it will require no such aid to retain it in its place. The footstrap is often added by the wish of the wearer, simply because either she, or the man who puts her up, does not know how to arrange her skirt, so as to make it hang as it ought to do. The practice of weighting the bottom of the skirt with shot is also unnecessary if a good tailor be employed. Some ladies have a loop stitched to the inside of the skirt, through which they pass the left foot, before putting it into the stirrup. This loop serves to keep the skirt down. However effective these loop arrangements may be for park hacking, they are hardly applicable for hunting, or rough work. Care should be taken that the curved seam which is made in the skirt for the right knee, should fit it exactly. "Your habit-maker will, of course, put large hooks around the waist of your bodice, and eyes of corresponding size attached to the skirt; so that both may be kept in their place" (*Mrs. Power O'Donoghue*). To prevent the cloth wearing out too fast, some ladies have that part of the skirt, which passes over the pommel, lined with black leather. It is just possible that the unyielding

leather may prove dangerous in the event of a fall. The same remark applies to the leather band used by some ladies to line the bottom of the skirt, in order to prevent it from getting torn. The skirt should be just ample enough to allow perfect freedom, and no more. It is well to have the habit cut away underneath, on the inside, so as to allow the left foot free play. Some ladies like the front of the *jacket* cut open at the neck, like a gentleman's coat, with a neat scarf and pin; while others prefer it to be close up to the throat with a simple, low, stand-up *white collar*. I have to thank Mrs. O'Donoghue for pointing out to me that the former arrangement is objectionable, in cold weather, from the fact of its causing the upper part of the chest to be exposed, in a manner which might prove dangerous to the fair wearer's health. I venture to think that the open front is, from an artistic point of view, rather "trying."

A neat arrangement is to have the collar attached to a short "habit shirt," which does away with the necessity of either pinning or stitching. Some ladies, however, find that when the collar is attached in this manner it has a tendency to ruck up. If it does so, a tape may be attached to the habit shirt in front, and

another to the stays. If these two tapes be tied together, the collar will remain stationary. Pins, if possible, should not be used with the riding dress. The collar may be fastened with a stud. If a jacket with a high collar be adopted, it should fit the neck accurately, and should be cut a trifle low in front, so as to take away the hard, stiff appearance which the collar of a jacket has that is the same height all the way round. The *sleeves* should be sufficiently loose at the shoulders to allow free play to the arms, which is all-essential when crossing a country, or in a moment of difficulty. The remaining part of the sleeves should be tight. All ladies agree that the *cuffs* should be small, neat and perfectly plain. They may be fixed by a button sewn on to the inside of the sleeve, and attached to a corresponding button-hole made in the centre of the cuff. This will keep it from shifting, and allow a small white rim to be visible. Or, a loop of thin elastic, about three-quarters of an inch long, may be sewn inside each sleeve at the back seam of each cuff of the jacket, so as to pass around the solitaire or link of the linen cuff. A high-necked, closely-fitting petticoat body with long sleeves may be worn. The cuffs may then form a part of the sleeves, or may be buttoned on to them ; while the collar

may be sewn on to it. The buttons of the jacket should be of black composition, black bone, or flat cloth ; while the edge down the front should be a "raw-edge," or plain and turned-in like that of a gentleman's coat. There should be no braid, or trimming. The fitting of the jacket must be trusted to the tailor, who ought not to be handicapped by tight lacing ; for nothing spoils a seat so much, or makes a rider look so out of place, as "pulling in," and stays which are too long on the hips.

If a *spur* be worn, the habit may be cut away on the inside, in the manner I have already described. No special arrangement is necessary for the spur, which is generally quite severe enough, even when used through a thick skirt.

Riding corsets should be made with as much care to fit the figure, as the habit itself. They should be moderately long from the waist upwards, and should not reach the hips. Many ladies wear those absurd little riding belts which are made something after the fashion of Swiss bands. They are a mistake, as ladies now-a-days are so accustomed to wear stays that they are uncomfortable without the support which they afford ; while anything that makes a rider ill-at-ease is to be

avoided. Steel clasps should, on no account, be used, as they are very dangerous in case of a fall.

Neat *top boots and breeches* are far more suitable for any sort of riding than are ordinary boots and cloth trousers, which are apt to wrinkle, ruck up, and, if not amply long enough, to cause an unpleasant drag on the knee. The breeches should be made to fit well. They should be loose on the thigh, should fit moderately tight below the knee, and should be continued below the swell of the calf of the leg, in order that they may not be liable to work up. The last six inches of the breeches may be made of silk, so as not to fill up the boot unnecessarily. They should button from the knee down. The buttons of the right leg should be on the inside, while those of the left should be on the outside, to prevent the limbs from being rubbed. Black cloth breeches lined with chamois leather, and made as described, may be used. Breeches made of buckskin are very comfortable to wear. The only objection to white is the possible awkwardness of their being seen in the event of a fall. If they are properly beaten after being cleaned, there will be no fear of the pipeclay showing through the habit.

If *trousers* be worn, they should fit the boot neatly

being cut away a little over the instep, should fit moderately close from the knee down, and should be sufficiently long to obviate any unpleasant drag at the knee. The leather straps may be made to button in the ordinary manner, or may be sewn to the bottom of the trousers, and may then be fastened or undone by a buckle below the sole. This buckle arrangement is a very neat and convenient one. If Wellington boots be used, as they ought to be, with trousers, they may be put on the latter *à la militaire*, so as to allow the fair wearer to get into both articles of attire at the same time. This will be necessary if the trousers be tight to the leg.

Petticoats are quite out of place on horseback.

Suspenders to the stockings will be found more comfortable than garters.

As the shape of the *hat* should conform to the style of the lady's face and figure, the choice of one should be left to the wearer's own good taste. The rather low-crowned silk chimneypot becomes most ladies, and is *de rigueur* for park riding. Some ladies like the round felt hat, the "billycock," for rough wear, while the soft felt hat harmonises admirably with some faces. It is well to have the silk hat made to order. It should be padded on

the inside, so as to prevent it from slipping off. The generality, I think, of good horsewomen, look upon the low chimneypot as the best "all round" hat, and wear nothing else. Much as I dislike the look of very shiny silk hats, still if one is a bit worn and has been wet a few times, it is a good plan, in order to make it look fresh and render it almost impervious to rain, to smooth it over with a silk handkerchief into which a very little sweet oil has been rubbed with the finger. No trimming is allowable, whatever form be adopted, though a black net *veil* is always admissible. "Never wear a veil on horseback, except it be a black one, and nothing with a border looks well. A plain band of spotted net, just reaching below the nostrils, and gathered away into a neat knot behind, is the most *distinguē*. Do not wear anything sufficiently long to cover the mouth, or it will cause you inconvenience on wet and frosty days. For dusty roads, a black gauze veil will be found useful, but avoid, as you would poison, every temptation to wear even the faintest scrap of colour on horseback. All such atrocities as blue and green veils have happily long since vanished, but, even still, a red bow, a gaudy flower stuck in the button-hole, and, oh, horror of horrors! a pocket-handkerchief appearing at an opening in the bosom, looking like a

miniature fomentation—these still occasionally shock the eyes of sensitive persons, and cause us to marvel at the wearer's bad taste. . . . In fastening your veil, a short steel pin with a round black head is best. The steel slips easily through the leaf of the hat, and the head being glossy and large, is easily found without groping or delay whenever you may desire to divest yourself of it" (*Mrs. Power O'Donoghue*).

The hat may be kept on by a piece of narrow flat elastic, and loop under the hair at the back. Narrow "lutestring" ribbon strings are an advisable addition, as they don't "give" as much as the elastic, which is sewn to the lining of the hat a little in front of the strings. The hair should be plainly and tightly twisted up in a small knot, and securely fixed just at the nape of the neck.

The *boots* may have a long low heel, so as to prevent the stirrup catching on the instep. It is well to have the waist of the sole of the boot made broad, for although a lady does not ride with her foot home in the stirrup, still a narrow-waisted sole will be liable to hurt the foot during a long ride, and is not suitable for walking. The boots may be made stout and comfortable. A strap of about an inch in length, provided with a buttonhole, should be fixed at the back of each boot so as to

be attached to a button sewn on to the cloth of the breeches, in order to prevent the boots working down.

Gloves, which should not be tight, may be made of dog or doe skin. They should be long in the fingers and wrists, and should be provided with buttons, for gloves which slip on, slip off just as easily.



CHAPTER VII.

BRIDLES AND SADDLES.

Principles of Bitting—Snaffles—Curb Bits—Bridle and Saddle Gear—How to put on the Bridle and Saddle—Choice of a Bit.

Principles of Bitting.

THE bridle is used for two objects—(1) to restrain, guide, turn, and back the horse; and (2) to enable him to carry his rider in the best possible manner.

As the greater portion of the weight of the horse's body has, on account of his conformation, to be borne by his fore legs, they are specially constructed for fulfilling their office as supporters; while the hind legs, though ill-adapted for carrying a burden, are admirably designed for propelling the body onward. Hence we may assume that the rider should sit well forward on the horse's back. Were the animal to continue standing still, he would naturally bear his burden best by the rider sitting quite motionless. The fore and hind limbs,

however, have not alone different weight-carrying capabilities, but during motion they respectively bear it better at one period of the stride, than at another. Thus, the hind quarters support it best when they are well under the body ; but, when they are extended to the rear at the conclusion of their stroke, weight placed far back will most materially impede the action of their muscles that draw the hind legs forward and arch the loins. These muscles, I may observe, are much less powerful than are those which give the hind legs their backward sweep. The fore legs, naturally, "act" to the greatest advantage when they are relieved of weight at the moment they are being raised from the ground. The spinal column, from the head to the point of the tail, accommodates itself to the movements of the limbs. Thus, when the hind legs are thrown to the rear, in the gallop, the neck and head are extended. When, on the contrary, the head is "brought in," and the neck arched, the shoulder-blades go back and the fore legs go forward. Hence it would be advantageous for the rider's weight to be moved slightly to the front when the horse straightens his neck, and to be shifted a little back when he brings it in. The bridle enables this "give and take" action to be

performed with ease and precision. Were it absent, it would be extremely difficult for the rider to accommodate his weight to the movements of the horse. With its aid, however, the play of the animal's head and neck gives "the time" to the rider, who has simply to "catch a good hold" of his horse's head, keep his arms and body pliable, and allow the horse to do the rest. The displacement of weight is of course effected by the slight yielding of the body, without any shifting of the seat in the saddle. To be convinced that conforming to the movements of the horse renders his task easier, we need but compare the difference in the way he carries a good rider, to that which he travels under one who "sits like a sack." The horse himself, by bending his neck, accommodates the weight of his head, and that part of his neck which is beyond the direct support of his fore legs, to the movements of his limbs. The foregoing remarks have been made with special reference to the canter and gallop; in the trot, also, the horse, to go fast and well, must, as every horseman knows, "take a good hold of his bit," so that the weight of the rider may be brought well forward.

I may remark, in passing, that at the gallop, the hind feet quit the ground very nearly, though not quite,

at the same time ; while there is a marked interval between the moments at which the fore feet are respectively raised.

The two essentials, then, for good bitting, are (1) that the horse should be under control ; and (2) that he should "go up to his bridle"—in other words, that he should allow the bit to press on his mouth without flinching from it, though he should obey the pressure according as the rider varies it. If, on the contrary, the horse be afraid to "face the bit," the rider will be unable to "catch hold of his head," and to accommodate himself to the movements of his mount ; while the animal will be afraid to extend its head and neck, and will consequently check the backward sweep of its hind quarters. From the bent position of the neck, the fore legs, however, will have the utmost freedom. The consequence of this constrained carriage of the body will be, that the horse will keep his hind legs too much under him, and will raise his fore legs too high ; in fact, he will be "over collected." Fashionable harness horses, which are driven with severe bits that they are afraid to "go up to," and whose heads are drawn back by gag bearing reins, furnish us with an excellent instance of this "over collection." Being well on their haunches, they

bend their knees and lift their fore legs in the most approved manner. The better they "stand" being "hit and held," the higher their action, and, consequently the higher their price. This style may be very suitable for a three or four mile drive in the park or in town, during the season, but it is not "business" from a horseman's point of view, as it entails a waste of muscular power. We may see a similar needless expenditure of force, in the case of a riding horse which will not face his bit, especially, if the man on his back endeavours to keep him "up to it," by the pressure of his legs, or by the aid of the spurs. It is quite right that a trooper who may be called upon to engage an adversary on horseback, with sword or lance, should be able to collect his charger, so as to make him turn, circle, or change with the utmost quickness and precision, by the mere indication of the bridle hand. We, however, who desire to ride like "workmen," should never use any bit which our horses will not face.

In order that the horse may go up to his bit, its pressure must be applied in a direction opposite to that in which his head is directed, as with the ordinary snaffle. If the horse be hurt by a tight curbchain pressing on a sensitive part of his lower jaw, or by a

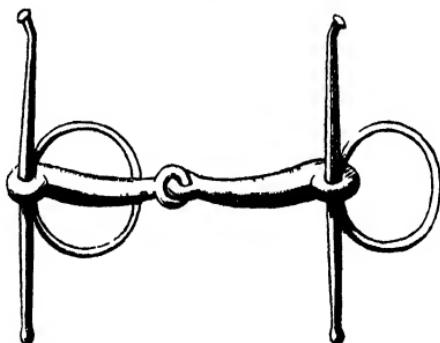
high port pressing against his palate, he may be cowed into submission, but he will not catch hold of his bit. We shall now consider the construction and adjustment of bits which horses will go up to. We need not trouble ourselves by trying to devise any special means of restraint for pullers, for the ordinary snaffle or curb, properly made and properly put on, is sufficient to control almost any horse, provided a good rider has hold of the reins. Although a fine horseman may be able to steer his mount in fair form with a severe bit, the inexperienced rider will fare infinitely worse with it, on a difficult horse, than he would do were the bit an easy one to the animal's mouth.

Snaffles.

The action of the snaffle is to restrain the horse by pressure on his tongue, *bars* of his mouth (the part of his gums which are bare of teeth between the tushes and grinders), and the corners of his mouth. Owing to the snaffle being jointed, the tongue receives but little pressure. When the horse carries his head in a more or less perpendicular manner, the bars offer the chief resistance ; but when he extends his head, whether he raises or lowers it, the pressure falls on the corners of

the mouth, and, possibly, in part, on the first back teeth. When a snaffle is smooth and sufficiently large, it fulfils, with all ordinary horses, every condition, from a "workman's" point of view, required in a perfect bit. If the horse be a hard puller, a severe snaffle may be employed: this, however, is not generally advisable, for the greater number of pullers that would resent, by

Fig. 17.



going all the faster, the punishment inflicted by a thin or twisted snaffle, would obey the forcible indication afforded by a smooth large mouthpiece which did not pain them. As a horse is far stronger than his rider, we must rely on easily understood indications rather than on brute force to control him.

There is a great deal of truth in the old saying that if a horse cannot be held with a snaffle, no other bit will hold him.

In turning the horse, the snaffle bridle acts by the *horn* (cheekpiece) of the bit pressing against the side of the mouth, and also by the *headstall* (the leather work by which the bit is attached to the head) pulling the head round.

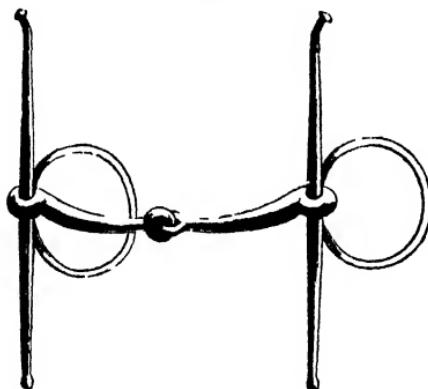
The following are the chief varieties of snaffles:—

1st. *The plain smooth snaffle* (see Fig. 17).—This is by far the best for general use.

2nd. *The twisted snaffle*.—I do not at all fancy this bit. If severity be required, I think a chain snaffle is preferable to it in every way.

3rd. *The thin racing snaffle* (see Fig. 18), either twisted

Fig. 18.



or smooth. I cannot understand why this variety was ever invented, unless it was for the object of saving two

or three ounces of weight. I have always found that it has a great tendency to make horses pull. The racing snaffles of the present day are not nearly so thin as those which were formerly used.

4th. *The chain snaffle*, in which the mouthpiece consists of a chain of several links. This is an admirable bit for horses which require some "holding," for it may be made easy or severe to the mouth as the rider chooses. To increase its severity, the chain may be twisted before being put into the horse's mouth. For tender-mouthed horses, the chain may be covered with three or four turns of washleather sewn on to it. Two chains, one above the other, are sometimes used instead of one.

5th. *The double-ringed snaffle*, which is similar to the ordinary bridoon of a double bridle, except that two rings are placed on the mouthpiece, inside those to which the reins are connected, for attachment to the headstall of the bridle. It is in very common use among harness horses. For saddle work, the rings of the mouthpiece to which the reins are fixed may be provided with horns like those of an ordinary snaffle. This is by far the best kind of snaffle for turning a horse, for the pull of either rein falls directly on the

opposite side of the horse's mouth, without being taken by the headstall. A moderately tight noseband, by closing the mouth and thus causing the horns of the snaffle to act, to greater advantage, against the side of the jaw opposite to which either rein is pulled, will materially increase the turning effect of this bit. The native polo players of Munipur, in which country polo has been the national game for centuries, all use the double-ringed snaffle with their matchless ponies.

6th. *The gag snaffle* is used with two reins, one being attached in the ordinary manner, while the other

Fig. 19



is a continuation of a separate headstall, the cheekpieces of which are rounded, and pass downwards freely through holes in the rings of the snaffle—instead of being buckled or sewn on to them—and from thence to the rider's hands. When the gag reins are pulled, the bit is forced against the corners of the horse's mouth, which makes him draw up his head. This bit is consequently very

useful with horses that "bore" their heads down, and with buck-jumpers. It may be used as a bridoon to

Fig. 20.

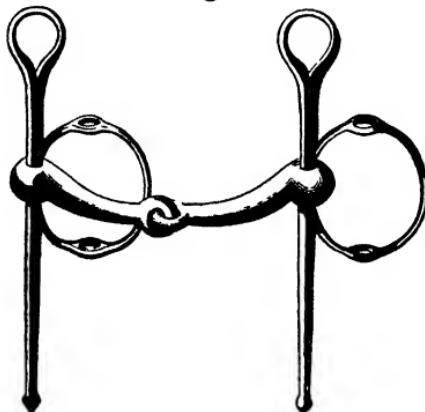
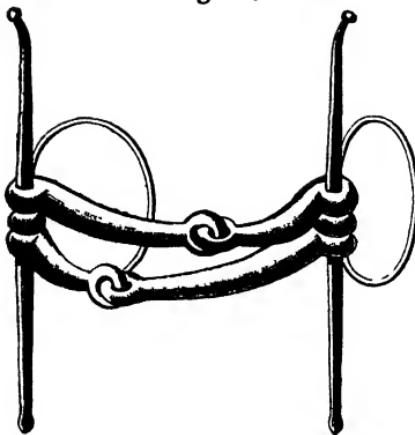


Fig. 21.



the double bridle (see Fig. 19). Fig. 20 represents a Pelham made for gag reins.

7th. *The double-mouthed snaffle* (Fig. 21) has two

mouthpieces which respectively have joints placed more to one side than to the other, so that, if the joint of the upper mouthpiece be more to the near side than to the off, that of the lower one will be more to the off than to the near, and *vice versa*. It forms a very severe bit, as it presses directly on the gums. It should not be used with a tight noseband, for opening out somewhat in the form of a **W** when the reins are drawn tight, it will then be apt to hurt the roof of the mouth.

8th. *The Newmarket snaffle* has attached to its rings a noseband, whose length can be altered, so as to divide the pressure derived from the pull of the reins, between the nose and the lower jaw, or to throw it exclusively on one or on the other. There are side straps attached to the headstall of the bridle, which prevent the noseband from falling too far down. It forms a very nice bit for a horse with a tender mouth.

Or, it is a double-ringed snaffle, which has attached to its inner rings a noseband, that is kept in position by pieces of leather sewn round the rings, and under the cheek ends. When one pair of reins is taken up, its action is that of an ordinary double-ringed snaffle; while the other, when drawn tight, causes all the pressure to fall on the horse's nose. It then forms

a severe and effectual check to a hard puller or bolter.

The *American snaffle*, Mr. F. V. Nicholls, saddler, of 2 Jermyn Street, S.W., suggests to me, being a most comfortable bit, might be used, with advantage, in this country. Its mouthpiece is of hardened indiarubber, which is tested to bear a very severe strain. It is in general use for match trotting in the States.

The *sawmouth bridoon* (see Fig. 22) may be attached to a snaffle in the event of the horse pulling very hard. It is a very severe form of that bit.

Fig. 22.



The *Tattersall's leading bit*, which has a circular mouthpiece for leading horses, may be added to the foregoing list. It is an excellent bit for this purpose, as it exerts an equal pressure on both sides of the mouth, in whichever direction the rein be pulled.

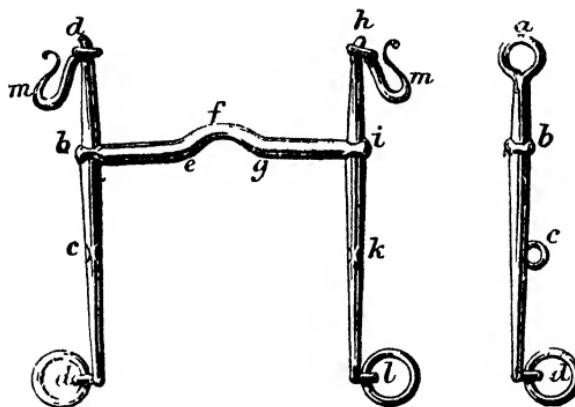
Running reins consist of a single long rein, which passes through the rings of the snaffle, and buckles on to the D's or staples in front of the saddle. This arrange-

ment keeps the horse's head down, and nearly doubles the power of the rider.

Curb Bits.

The following is a back and side view of a properly shaped curb bit, drawn to a quarter full size.

Fig. 23.



The names of the different parts of the curb are as follows:

<i>a d</i> and <i>h l</i>	Cheeks of bit.
<i>a b</i> and <i>h i</i>	Upper arms of cheeks of bit.
<i>b d</i> and <i>i l</i>	Lower „ „ „ „
<i>b i</i>	Mouthpiece.
<i>e f g</i>	Port.
<i>b e</i> and <i>g i</i>	Cannons.
<i>c</i> and <i>k</i>	Lipstrap rings.

Curbs are bits in which the principle of the lever is utilised for affording the rider a certain amount of mechanical advantage in restraining the horse.

I may remark that the term *bit* is very often restricted to curbs. I have, however, in the following pages, used it, for convenience sake, as a general term for either curb or snaffle. A *double bridle* is the expression used to signify one which has both a curb and a snaffle. It is also called a *bit and bridoon*.

A curb bridle is placed on the horse's head in the manner shown in Fig. 31, page 229.

The rings of the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit are attached to the checkpieces of the *headstall*, which is the term applied to the leather part of the bridle that goes on the horse's head.

The *curbchain* lies under the lower jaw, and is attached to the upper rings of the bit.

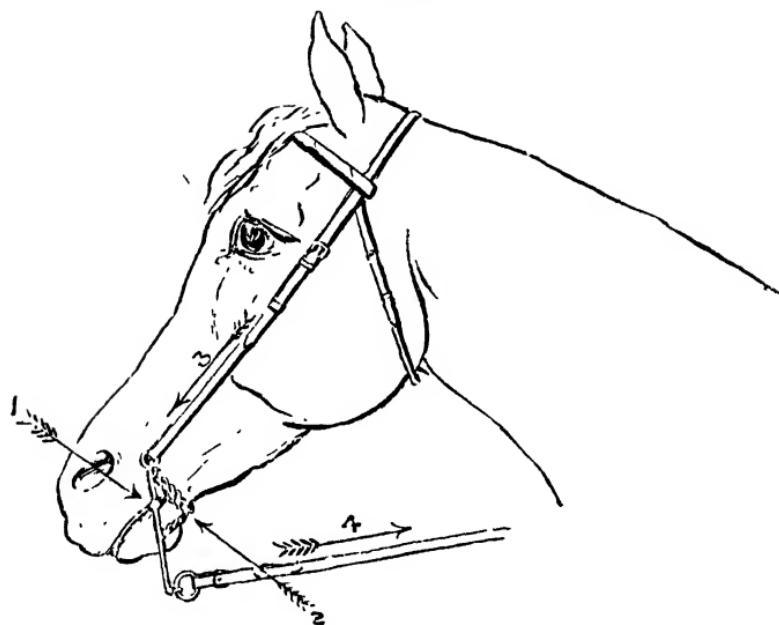
The *lipstrap*, which passes through a ring placed for that purpose on the curbchain, serves to prevent the curbchain from shifting upwards, and also keeps the cheeks of the bit from swinging forward and becoming reversed. It also helps to prevent a tricky horse from catching the checkpiece of the bit with his lower lip, or with his teeth.

The depression in the lower jaw, in which the curbchain should rest, is called the *chin groove*.

Action of the curb.—The following pressures are, when

the reins of the curb are drawn tight, exerted in the manner shown by arrowheads in Fig. 24 :

Fig. 24.



- (1) By the mouthpiece on the bars of the lower jaw, and on the tongue.
- (2) On the chin groove.
- (3) On the poll of the horse's head, over which the headstall passes.
- (4) The pull of the reins.

If we refer to page 188, we will see that the pressure

of the mouthpiece (1) is the only really legitimate one for restraining the horse.

The pressure of the curbchain (2) on the chin groove should be rendered as little irksome to the animal as possible, for any pain it may inflict on him will be in the direction in which he is going, and hence will only restrain him by making him afraid to go up to his bit, while it will have the natural tendency to cause him to throw up his head in the endeavour to save his jaw from injury. That curbchains hurt horses, in the manner described, is patent to any one who may have seen how fretful and unmanageable curb bits render many high-spirited animals that will go quietly in a plain snaffle. They "chuck up their heads" in the endeavour to save the lower jaw from the painful pressure of the curbchain, while we will frequently find the part against which it bears to be galled and bruised. Not uncommonly, in old standing cases, a bony deposit is formed on the lower jaw, as a result of continued inflammation. Even if we succeed in getting the animal under control, by inflicting pain on him with the curbchain, we shall do so by "cowing" him; in other words, we make him afraid to "go up to his bit," and shall, consequently, render him neither safe nor efficient to ride. The habits of

“chucking up the head,” and not going up to the bit, so seriously interfere with the comfort and safety of the rider, and with the usefulness of the animal, that it behoves every owner to avoid, by attending to the proper bitting of his horses, the possibility of their contracting these vices.

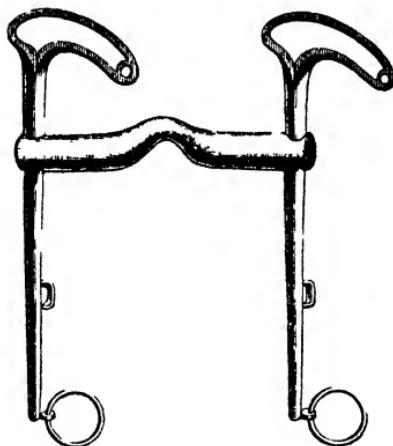
The downward pull on the headstall (3) should be obviated as much as it is in our power to do, because, by pulling the poll down, it interferes with the free action of the horse's head and neck, and, consequently, with the movements of his limbs. In practice, we find that the employment of a curb has a tendency to make a horse gallop “round,” in other words to bend his knees too much. Although this may be disregarded, when perfect control, rather than speed, is demanded, it has served to virtually banish curb bits from racing stables.

In the Chifney bit (see Fig. 29), the downward pull on the headstall is altogether done away with. To obviate this undesirable pull, Lord Thurlow invented a bit (see Fig. 25), which differs from the ordinary one by having the eyes of the upper arms of the cheeks made oval-shaped to the rear.

If we examine the under surface of the lower jaw, we

shall find that the bone at the chin groove (see Fig. 24) is smooth and rounded, while, immediately above it, the edges of the branches of the jaw are sharp and sensitive. Hence we may conclude that the curbchain should remain stationary in this groove, as it is the only convenient spot on which the chain can press without paining the horse.

Fig. 25.



I am indebted to Major Dwyer ('Seats and Saddles') for the knowledge of the principle that "the curbchain must lie in the curb groove, without any tendency to mount up out of it on to the sharp bones of the lower jaw."

As the bars are more sensitive than the tongue, the

port (see Fig. 23), has been devised, to throw more pressure on the former than on the latter, in order to increase the severity of the bit.

Principles to be observed in the construction and adjustment of curbs.—(1.) The longer the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit (see Fig. 23) are, the greater will be the downward pull on the headstall of the bridle, and the more tendency will the curbchain have to mount up on the sharp and sensitive edges of the branches of the jaw. If, however, the upper arms be too short, they will allow the cheeks of the bit to come in a line with the reins, when the horse pulls, and, consequently, will do away with all the mechanical advantage to be derived from the employment of a curb. I have found that, for ordinary horses, it is advisable to fix this length, measuring from the lower edge of the mouthpiece (on which the upper arms of the cheek revolve) to the upper ring of the cheek, at $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches (see Fig. 26). The measurement is usually taken from the centre of the mouthpiece, a plan which does not allow for the thickness of this steel bar. It is evident, however, that the thicker the mouthpiece, the longer does the upper arm virtually become.

(2.) Having now fixed the length of the upper arm of

the cheek, we may, to obtain increased power, lengthen the lower arm, as we may find convenient—say, to four and a half inches.

(3.) The width of the mouthpiece should accurately correspond with that of the horse's mouth, so that it may not pinch the lips by being too tight, nor be liable to slip from side to side by being too loose. In the latter case, the horse is apt to acquire the habit of "boring" to one side, by getting one of the cheeks of the bit close up against the side of his mouth, which will cause the port to become shifted over to the other side. He will then, owing to the absence of the port, be able to relieve the gum from pressure on the side to which he bores, by interposing his tongue between it and the mouthpiece. When the mouthpiece fits accurately, the port will remain in the centre of the mouth, so that there will be an "even feeling" on both sides.

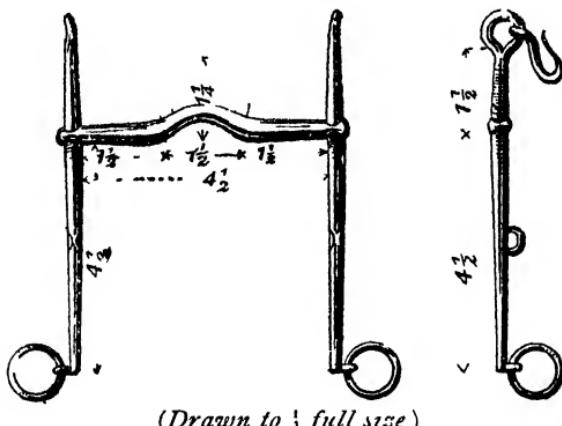
(4.) If we wish to render the bit less severe, we may lower the port, so as to allow the tongue to take some of the pressure. The port should on no account be more than one and a quarter inches high, lest it might hurt the horse by pressing against his palate—a form of punishment which, I need hardly point out, is opposed to the very first principles of good bitting.

(5.) The mouthpiece should be placed low down in the mouth, so that the curbchain may not have any tendency to slip upwards out of the chin groove, and that the downward pull on the headstall may be obviated as much as possible.

(6.) The curbchain should be sufficiently loose to allow a certain amount of "play."

Agreeably to the foregoing principles, I have drawn the following sketch of a curb bit for a horse with an ordinary sized mouth.

Fig. 26.



The measurements are given in inches. The maximum height of the port is shown by dotted lines

	Inches
Width of mouthpiece	$4\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{3}{4}$
Height of port not to exceed [Dwyer]	$1\frac{1}{2}$

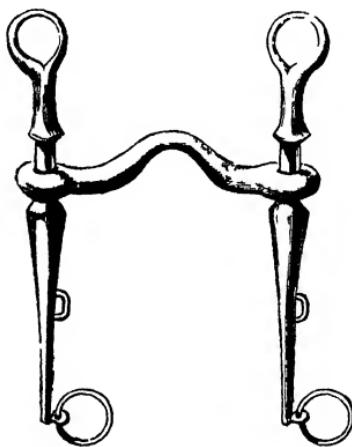
	Inches.
Width of port	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Length of upper arm of cheek, measured from lower part of mouthpiece to ring	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Length of lower arm of cheek, about	$4\frac{1}{2}$

Keeping in view the principle that the *curbchain* should on no account hurt the horse's chin, we should select one which will lie flat and smooth, in preference to one with large and few links. The chain may be covered with leather, or there may be a leather strap placed between it and the horse's jaw. Instead of a curbchain, a flat piece of bridle leather, furnished with a few links at each end, may be used. "It is very clear that the narrower the chain is made, the more likely is it to cause pain, which is just what we want to avoid, and we should therefore endeavour to make it as broad as possible. The vulgar notion of a sharp curb, is, as the reader perceives, a monstrous absurdity" (*Major Dwyer*). The curbchain should not be too broad, for it would, then, be liable to hurt the sharp edges of the branches of the lower jaw.

The curb bit which has a *sliding mouthpiece* (see Fig. 27) appears to me to be wrong in principle, for, if placed so as to have a right position when the reins are drawn tight, the mouthpiece will knock against the tushes

when the reins are slackened. The horse will continually play with this sliding mouthpiece when the snaffle only is used, or when both reins are loose : hence, in these cases, its presence seems to keep the mouth "lively." But when the curb reins are taken up, this mouthpiece will act the same as that of any other curb, and will

Fig. 27.

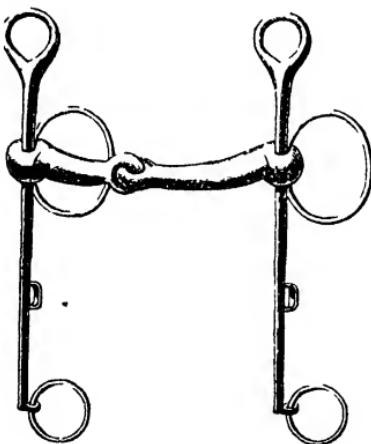


have no up-and-down play whatsover. This bit, nevertheless, suits many horses better than the ordinary made curb—seemingly, from the fact that the upper arms of the checkpieces are generally much shorter, and, consequently, more correct in length, than those of the other, whose upper arms—measured from the lower part of the mouthpiece to the rings—are, usually, quite

2½ inches long. A horse, perhaps, may not pull as much against this sliding mouthpiece as against a fixed one. My only objection to it is that it cannot be placed sufficiently low in the mouth, without interfering with the tushes. It might do all right with mares, although, if placed sufficiently low, it would look bad.

Pelhams.—The Pelham is a combination of the curb and snaffle in various forms. Its action, when it has a

Fig. 28. .



jointed mouthpiece (see Fig. 28), is very faulty, for, when the curb reins are drawn tight, the cheeks of the bit jam against the sides of the mouth, by reason of the joint which is at the centre of the mouthpiece, whose width, instead of exactly corresponding with that of the horse's mouth,

varies at every touch of the rider's hands on the reins. With a straight bar mouthpiece, it rests chiefly on the tongue, and is then a very easy bit; while with a port and unjointed mouthpiece the Pelham will act as an ordinary curb. The *Hanoverian Pelham* is a powerful form of bit. It has a jointed port attached to short "cannons," on which are fixed rollers that rest on the bars of the horse's mouth. Many persons consider it very effective with a puller, and that, for park hacking, or for showing off a horse's paces, it is one of the best bits in light hands.

Pelhams have a marked tendency to make horses carry their heads too low, by reason of the strong downward pull they exert on the headstall of the bridle to which they are attached. This appears to be owing to the presence of the joint in the centre of the mouthpiece and to the fact that the upper arms of their cheeks are generally far too long.

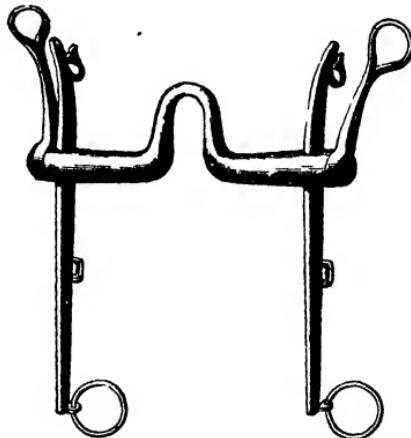
With some riders, this tendency may be partly due to the habit they have of riding on both reins, which, with the Pelham, on account of the action of the snaffle reins, causes the mouthpiece to be drawn up towards the corners of the mouth, and the curbchain to work up on the branches of the lower jaw. The forward action of

the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit will, then, be almost entirely arrested.

Pelhams may be used with "stargazers," or with horses which throw their heads up, supposing that, for fashion's sake, a curb of some sort must be employed in preference to a snaffle.

The Chifney bit.—The celebrated Sam Chifney, who fell into disgrace with the racing public, on account of

Fig. 29.



having¹ been suspected of intentionally losing a race at Newmarket on the 20th October, 1791, when riding the then Prince of Wales's horse, Escape, invented this form of curb (Fig. 29), in which the objectionable downward pull on the headstall is entirely dispensed with, for its headstall is attached to short arms, that revolve on

the mouthpiece, independently of the cheeks of the bit, to which the curbchain is hooked.

The Chifney bit is very severe, and is inapplicable for most horses that are ridden by men with indifferent hands, for its curbchain alone resists the forward action of the upper arms of the cheeks of the bit. Thus, the whole of the pressure falls on the gums, tongue and under part of the lower jaw, while none of it is taken, as with the ordinary curb, by the animal's poll, which, I need hardly say, is not as sensitive as the parts just named.

Bridle and Saddle Gear.

The *names of the different parts of a bridle* are as follows :—

The *crownpiece*, which passes over the horse's poll.

The *checkpieces*, which connect the crownpiece with the bit.

The *throat latch* (usually pronounced "throat lash"), which is a part of the crownpiece, and serves to prevent the bridle from slipping over the horse's head by passing under his throat.

The *forehead band, browband, or front*, which goes across the horse's forehead.

A *headstall* is the name given to the foregoing leather work, when in a collected form, and to which is attached the *snaffle*, the *bit and bridoon*, the *Chifney bit*, or the *Pelham*.

The *lipstrap* serves to keep the curbchain in its place.

The *reins* are connected to the rings of the curb or snaffle.

The *billets* are the ends of the reins, or of the cheek-pieces of the bridle, which buckle on to the bit.

Locps or *keepers* serve, when buckles are used, to retain the ends of the billets.

Stops are used with reins which have buckles, to prevent the martingale rings catching on the buckles.

A *bridoon head* is the headstall of the snaffle of a double bridle. It has neither throat latch nor forehead band.

Headstalls.—It is considered to be “the thing” to have the headstall sewn, and not buckled, on to the bit. This plan undoubtedly looks far neater than the other, although it is somewhat inconvenient to the groom when he wants to clean the bridle. Besides this, it does not admit of the bit being readily changed. These objections can, of course, have no weight with a man who has as many different bridles and bits as he may choose

to use; but they are most valid ones to a horse owner who is obliged to study usefulness rather than show, or who may not have a saddler's shop at hand, from which to procure, at a moment's notice, whatever gear he may require. If he had a spare easy curb bit, and wanted to put it on instead of a severe one, which was already attached to the bridle, or if he wished to use a chain snaffle, instead of a plain smooth one, it would be most inconvenient, if he had no other headstall, to be obliged to have the stitches ripped up, and the headstall sewn on afresh. For country or colonial work, we may often want to use the headstall of a snaffle for a double bridle, and *vice versa*.

Double buckles on a bridle are the most useful kind, as they do away with the necessity of having "loops" for the "billetts," which is the term applied to the straps that pass through the buckles (see Fig. 32, page 233).

The headstall of a curb bit may be attached by means of plated "spring billets," which look neater, can be detached in an instant, and will allow greater freedom to the forward action of the cheek of the bit, than it would have were it connected by leather.

Forehead Bands, Browbands, or Fronts, are generally made of plain leather, though some people con-

sider a covering of silk ribbon, or patent coloured leather, a relief. The browband of a racing bridle may, appropriately, be of the owner's colours.

The Throat Latch may have a buckle on the near side, or may have one also on the off side.

A Lipstrap should always be used with a curb, for, in its absence, a horse may, at any moment, when galloping, throw his head up, and reverse the position of the cheeks of the bit, thus depriving the rider of proper control over him. If, however, when he brings his head down again, the rider, at the same time, slackens the reins, the cheeks of the bit will fall back into their usual position. Besides this, some horses have a trick of catching the cheek, on one side, with their lip, and then boring down to that side; a practice which the presence of the lipstrap will prevent. Lipstraps are generally made of leather and provided with a buckle. They sometimes consist of a light steel chain which has "spring hooks" at each end. I like the latter arrangement, as being simple and convenient, although some consider it only fit for the bit of a lady's horse.

Reins.—Having reins thick, thin, broad, or narrow, is a point which the rider should decide for himself. Almost all good horsemen like them to be pliable, and

moderately thin and broad. The only real advantage of having the reins sewn instead of buckled on to the bit, is that it dispenses with the necessity of having "stops" on the reins which pass through the rings of the martingale (see Fig. 32, page 233). Though it looks better, it is inconvenient, as it does not admit of a change of bits.

With a double bridle, I prefer having both reins of equal breadth, instead of having the curb rein narrow, and the snaffle rein broad, as is frequently the practice. The buckle at the centre of the one which passes through the rings of the martingale, will serve to distinguish it from the other. The "feeling" in the hands with reins of equal substance, is far more pleasant than when they are of different sizes. When the reins are held according to a uniform method, there will not be the slightest possibility of the rider becoming confused as to their respective identity.

In order to prevent the reins slipping through the fingers with a puller, pieces of leather, about a quarter of an inch broad, and as long as the width of the reins, are sometimes sewn across the inside part of the reins, at intervals of three or four inches. With gloves on, I don't think there is any need of this arrangement; while,

without them, a little resin rubbed on the hands will give all the "hold" the rider may require. The presence of these cross bits of leather interferes somewhat with the free handling of the reins, especially when lengthening or shortening them.

If the reins which pass through the rings of the martingale be not sewn on to the bit, they should be provided with "stops," so as to prevent the martingale rings from being caught on the buckles (see page 233).

Nosebands.—An ordinary noseband, buckled tight, will considerably increase the power of either curb or snaffle. When the horse is turned to the right or to the left, it allows the horns of the snaffle, on the side from which he is turned, to act in the most advantageous manner against the side of his upper and lower jaws. It also causes him to bring his head lower and bend his neck more than he would do without it, because it deprives him of the power of yielding with the lower jaw only. With the curb, it prevents him from shifting the bit about in his mouth; and also, when he is being turned, it increases the power of the rider in pulling his head round, as it fixes his upper and lower jaws together, and thus deprives him of the side "play" of

the lower jaw on which the curb bears. Major Dwyer remarks, that it prevents the horse catching the bit with his back teeth.

The *cavasson noseband* is the neatest and most useful kind. It may either have a separate headpiece, similar to the "bridoon head" of a double bridle, or have cheek-pieces which fasten on to the buckles to which the crown-piece of the bridle is attached. It can then be raised or lowered as required, and may be used with either snaffle or curb.

A *Bucephalus noseband* is merely an arrangement for tightening and loosening a noseband whose ends pass round the lower jaw and buckle on to the upper rings of the cheeks of the curb.

In order to increase the severity of the noseband with a standing martingale, a flat piece of flexible steel, or a curbchain, may be sewn up inside the front part of the noseband. This arrangement might be useful with a determined rearer.

A noseband may be used, with advantage, to take off the plainness of a horse's head.

Martingales.—The uses of the *running martingale* are—(1) to aid the hands and arms in keeping the horse's head down; (2) to increase the power of the rider in

relieves the rider's hands and arms of a great deal of disagreeable exertion.

For park or ladies' hacks, this martingale may be employed to keep their heads down, so that they may not soil their riders' clothes with foam.

Saddles.—*The names of the different parts of a saddle* are as follows :—

The part which goes over the withers is called the *pommel* or *head*, while the hind part of the saddle is termed the *cantle*. The *seat* is that portion of the saddle on which the rider sits. The *tree* comprises the wood and iron framework. The *gullet plate* is the iron arch under the pommel. The *points of the tree* are the wooden continuations of the gullet plate. The *bars of the tree* are the narrow front portions of the wooden sidepieces of the tree, while the *hollies of the tree* are the broad boards on which the rider sits. The *pannel* is the lining which lies between the tree and the horse's back. The *point pockets* are the small pockets in which the ends of the points of the tree rest. The *spring bars* allow the stirrup leathers to be attached to, or detached from, the saddle. The *knice pads*, or *rolls*, are placed on the *flaps* to help to prevent the rider's knees going forward. The *skirts* are the small flaps that cover the bars on which the stirrup

leathers are suspended. The *sweat flaps* are the pieces of leather which are placed under the girth straps, on each side, to prevent the sweat working through. D's are small semicircular metal hoops which are attached by *chapes* (short leather straps) to the front or back of the saddle for strapping on a coat, shoe case, etc. *Staples* are somewhat similar in size and shape to D's, but are firmly fixed to the tree.

The chief points to be considered about a saddle are that it should be of a suitable fit for the horse's back, and of a proper size and shape for the rider. If well made, it will be long enough, without being too heavy. Its length should, as a rule, be proportionate to that of the rider's thighs. A bad rider may require extra weight in the tree, so as to afford him a broad and roomy seat, while a good horseman may well dispense with such aid. Short saddles are most objectionable, both on account of their curtailing the surface over which the weight of the rider is distributed, and also by their tendency to give horses sore backs, as I have pointed out in my 'Veterinary Notes for Horse Owners,' page 185.

The saddle, between the points of the tree, should accurately fit the horse, so that it may not be liable to

work backwards and forwards, and that the gullet plate may not hurt the withers.

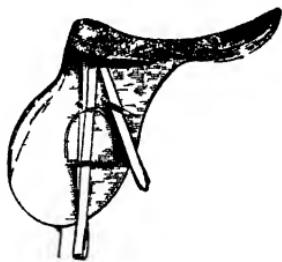
Many people prefer a saddle with the pommel cut back to one with it cut straight down. The idea of the former looking better than the latter, is a matter of taste. It probably gives the horse the appearance of having more sloping shoulders than he would have, were the other form used. It may, however, be objected to on account of its requiring a slightly stronger, and consequently a heavier tree than one with a straight-cut pommel, which, as far as my experience goes, affords the better fit of the two.

The points of the tree should slope a little to the front. They will then fit the horse better than if they came straight down, provided that the animal has not a very upright shoulder; and will not be liable to wear through the flaps, as they often do, when of the other shape, by reason of the rider's legs pressing the flaps continually against the points of the tree.

The flaps of a saddle should, as a rule, be cut well "forward" (see Fig. 30), so as to allow the thigh to be kept at a good slope. The flaps may have knee pads, or be plain, as the rider chooses. The former shape certainly gives a better "grip" to an indifferent rider with

round thighs, than the latter. It has, however, been objected to on the ground that it is apt to cause sprains of the knee, thigh, and back, especially when landing after a drop jump. Doubtless it is true that such accidents do happen, but they are of sufficiently rare occurrence to be disregarded. The plain flap lasts

Fig. 30.



longer, is somewhat cheaper, and looks, I think, more workmanlike, than the other.

Saddles covered with doeskin, or having the flaps covered with it, and the seat with pigskin, afford the rider a very firm grip. They are, however, much more suitable for use in hot climates, than in damp ones like England.

As a rule, cheap machine-made saddles look bad, and are comfortable neither to the horse nor to his rider. They are made of inferior leather, have long, coarse stitches, and fit the back by reason of extra stuffing in

the pannel, and not, as they ought to do, by the tree being of a proper shape. As the substance of each hide varies in its different parts, while the strength which is applied to each stitch by the machine remains uniform, the sewing is much inferior to that done by hand.

A saddle should have as little stuffing as possible compatible with an accurate fit and immunity from the danger of its hurting the horse's back ; for the less the distance is between the rider and his horse the firmer will be his seat. The best makers nowadays construct saddles so admirably that they leave little, if anything, to be desired.

Pannels should be "laced" (sewn) in, and not nailed to the tree, for if the latter method be adopted, the nails may work loose and hurt the horse. One nail, placed in the centre and just under the cantle, must be retained

Mr. Nicholls has kindly furnished me with the following notes on saddles :

It is not a bad plan to allow 1 lb. for the saddle, up to 14 lb., for every stone of the rider's weight. This will give sufficient strength in the tree, and size enough for a heavy man to sit comfortably. The length of the seat should vary from 17 to 18 inches,

measuring from head to cantle, and the width, from 11 to 13 inches, according to the height and weight of the rider. A man with long thighs will require the flaps to be set well forward, while men with short, round thighs should have them nearly straight, or the knee pads will afford no assistance. In other respects, the shape of a saddle, whether straight in front, or cut back, is very much a matter of individual taste. It is a great mistake to suppose that a saddle ought to fit any horse. In well-appointed stables, each favourite horse has, usually, his own saddle. A saddle tree, to fit a horse accurately, should have a level bearing along the muscles of the back, with sufficient space in front and behind, for a finger to be inserted under the pommel or cantle. The bellies of the tree should be at such a slope that the pannal under them may lie close on both sides of the back. The fact of the bellies being too flat often causes a sore back, by its allowing the tree to touch the backbone. The points of the tree should fit closely without pinching. One thing to be observed in choosing a saddle, is that the tree should not be too wide in the centre, but should be formed so as to allow the rider to get well down in his fork, that he may get a firm grip with the thighs, and, consequently, a secure seat in the saddle.

The dip in the seat of the saddle should be exactly in the centre. No leather is equal to hogskin, although the quality of it has deteriorated a great deal of late years, in consequence of pigs being bred finer, and coming earlier to maturity, than formerly. Common low-priced saddles, whether machine or hand-made, are expensive in the end. They look bad, wear indifferently, and are comfortable neither to the horse nor to the rider. At the same time, men are such creatures of habit, that they will get fond of, and swear by, an old saddle to which they have become accustomed, although it may be faulty, both in construction and quality. An amusing instance of this occurred lately. An officer of a crack cavalry regiment, who has a great reputation for horsey knowledge, went to a saddler to get a favourite saddle copied exactly, as he said it was the best and most comfortable one upon which he had ever sat. Upon inspection, the pattern was found to be the most worthless thing imaginable. The tree was out of all proportion. It had spread in front, wide enough for a dray horse. It was bowed in the centre, so that only about three inches of the saddle could rest upon the horse's back ; while the seat was so devoid of setting and stuffing, that the rider sat in a dip on the hogskin and boards. When the

owner came again, was shown and had explained to him the defects of the saddle, he decided at once to reject the pattern, the sole merit of which, to him, consisted, probably, in the unusual dip of the seat, which was obtained at the expense of the horse, who was unable to complain about his muscles being made to ache by the unequal distribution of weight.

Girths.—Fitzwilliam girths, which consist of one broad girth attached to the saddle by two buckles at each side, with an ordinary-shaped girth over it, are perhaps the best for general work. Those made of plaited or twisted raw hide, which are usually called Australian girths, and others made after the same pattern, but of cord, answer extremely well. Being formed of open material, they save the part over which they pass from becoming heated, and consequently chafed. A capital girth, for colonial work, may be made from a broad leather strap, slit lengthwise into several divisions, and furnished with two or three buckles on each side. The strap may be cut out of the middle of the hide. It may be soaked in neat's-foot oil to make it pliable.

A *girth buckle* should be divided by a bar across its underneath surface, so that the point of the tongue may lie flush with the buckle, and that the tongue be

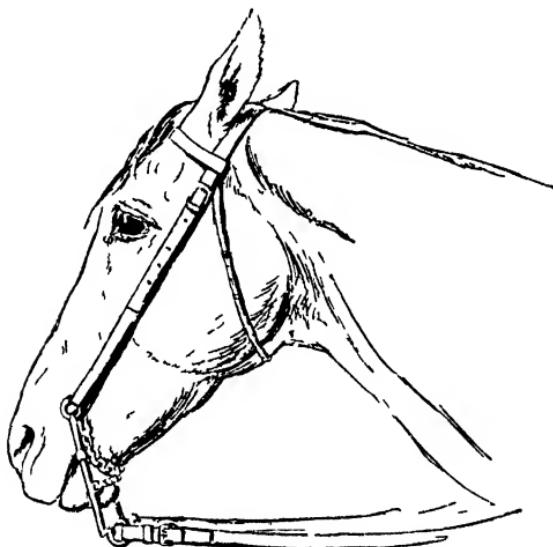
not liable to be pulled through. If the centre bar be absent, the point of the tongue of the buckle, on account of its being raised, will stick into the flap of the saddle and will score, and thus wear out the girth tug or strap when the horse is being ungirthed. If my description be not plain enough, an inspection of the ordinary girth buckle will explain to the reader the reason why the centre bar is used with it.

Saddle Cloths.—The legitimate use of a saddle cloth is to save the pannal of the saddle from becoming soiled by sweat. It should be thin in order to avoid giving any “play” to the saddle. A thick one, when used to prevent a sore back, is but a clumsy makeshift. Its use should be restricted to cases in which it is impossible to get the saddle properly stuffed. Saddle cloths made of one thickness of leather, answer their purpose admirably. If constantly worn, they will keep soft and pliable, by reason of their absorbing the oil which is excreted by the skin on which they rest. It is a good plan, before using a new leather saddle cloth, to rub into it a little cod-liver oil, which will keep it soft for a long time.

How to put on the Bridle and Saddle.

Before putting on the bridle, the crownpiece should be held in the left hand, while the right holds the reins at their centre in the full of the hand. The reins are

Fig. 31.



then passed over the head, and placed on the neck. The right hand takes the crownpiece of the bridle, and holds it in front of the face, while the left hand places the bit in the mouth. The right hand may be steadied by its holding the forelock.

Before putting on a double bridle, the bridoon

(snaffle) should be placed over the mouthpiece of the curb.

The snaffle should be put low enough in the mouth to just avoid wrinkling its corners.

The mouthpiece of the *curb*, as directed by Colonel Greenwood in his excellent book, 'Hints on Horsemanship,' should be placed so that it may be just clear of the tushes of the horse, or about one inch above the corner nippers of the mare; in fact, as low as possible without involving the danger of the curbchain slipping over the animal's chin. When the curb is in this position, the curbchain will have but little tendency to work up on to the sharp edges of the lower jaw; while the downward pull on the headstall will be got rid of as much as the construction of the bit will allow. I am aware that when placed in the position I have described, the curb, when its reins are slack, will appear to unaccustomed eyes to be placed far too low. When the reins, however, are drawn tight, the veriest novice will appreciate the correctness of the adjustment. By adopting this method of arranging the curb, I have succeeded, in scores of cases, as if by magic, in getting horses to go quietly in it, who previously were all but unmanageable with one in their mouths. I am deeply indebted to

Colonel Greenwood for this very "straight tip," which is the best I have ever received, from a book, on the subject of biting horses. In the cavalry, the mouthpiece is placed an inch higher in the mouth than what Colonel Greenwood advises.

The *curbchain* should pass *outside* of the snaffle, and should be of such length that it may lie flat and even against the chin groove, with a certain amount of play, say, through about thirty degrees. If too much play be given, the mechanical advantage of the curb will be more or less nullified. The last links of the chain, on both sides, should be, first of all, respectively attached to the curbchain hooks, and then the slack portion should be taken up, in equal lengths, on both hooks, so that the small ring, through which the lip strap passes, may be equally distant from each of them, and that the shape of the curbchain may be the same on both sides of that part of the jaw against which it presses. The looser the curbchain, the less severe will the bit naturally be.

A *throat latch* should be put on very loosely. If buckled tightly, it will not alone incommod the horse's breathing, but will also, as pointed out by "Harry Hieover," spoil the look of his head; while if it be put on too loosely, it will appear dealer-like.

If a *noseband* be put on merely for show, it should be

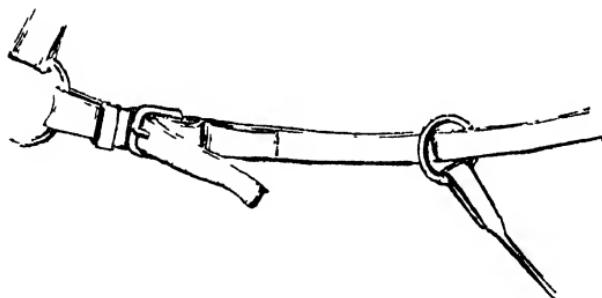
moderately loose, as it will then look best; but if for use, it should be drawn tight. It may be placed a couple of inches clear of the upper rings of the cheeks of the bit, if with a curb, so that it may not press inconveniently on the horse's nostrils. It ought to occupy the same position with the snaffle.

A *running martingale*, as I have before stated, should be sufficiently long to allow the pull of the reins to be in a line with the top of the withers. With horses which carry their heads in a proper position, the martingale may be lengthened out a little more. As the effect of a *short martingale*, with a snaffle, is to throw the pressure on the bars of the horse's mouth, it should on no account be employed with animals which are required to jump, for they would, then, be naturally afraid to face their bit, being well aware that every jerk on the reins would fall on their gums, which are tender and unyielding; while, if the martingale were lengthened out, the pressure would come on the corners of the mouth, which are able to "give and take" to a certain extent with the action of the snaffle.

If "stops" be not on reins which have buckles, the ends of the straps (*billetts*) of the buckles should be withdrawn out of their "keepers," as in the accompanying sketch, so that the rings of the martingale may not

catch on the buckles, which might lead to a serious accident with an impetuous horse.

Fig. 32.



When the martingale is used with the double bridle, it is almost always put on the bridoon reins. When it is employed with a double reined snaffle, the lower reins should be passed through the martingale rings. In ordinary riding, two reins are used with a snaffle and martingale; while the Newmarket custom with race-horses is to have only one rein on the snaffle, whether a martingale be employed or not. It being as necessary to keep a horse's head in position, and to ride him up to his bridle, with a curb as with a snaffle, the martingale is as applicable to the reins of the former as it is to those of the latter, always supposing that, with the curb, the martingale is lengthened sufficiently out, so as to allow the pull of the reins to be clear of the top of the withers.

The martingale should be attached to the surcingle, if one be used, or to the front (under) girth.

The following *practical rule for the adjustment of the standing martingale* may be found useful. Fix it at such a length that a running martingale, were it also on, would be drawn up to its fullest extent when the rider holds the reins just clear of the top of the withers. The running martingale might be put on, in order to determine the proper length of the standing martingale, and taken off when that is done. The legitimate action of the horse's head would then be no more interfered with, than it would be were the rider to keep it in proper position by means of a running martingale. We know from experience that it is never desirable, except when trying to prevent a horse from kicking, and when easing the strain on our own arms, to hold our hands higher than just clear of the withers. Hence I submit that a standing martingale, used at the length I have described, cannot interfere with any of the useful movements of the horse, whether he is walking, trotting, galloping or jumping.

To prevent a horse from boring to one side, if he has that habit, we may pass a strap through the ring of the ^{u.} raffle, on the other side, and through the loop formed ^{sketc.}

by the throat latch, and then tighten the strap as required. The pressure this arrangement puts on the side of the mouth opposite to which the horse bores, will generally make him go with an “even feeling” on both reins.

When a horse carries his head too low down in galloping, the snaffle may be fixed higher than usual, so that the bearing on the corners of the mouth may make him hold his head up in the manner he ought to do. This arrangement is simply a substitute for the gag snaffle.

The following description of a *plan for bridling a buck-jumper*, such as are met with in Australia, may not be out of place here.

Put on a snaffle with double reins, unbuckle one pair at the centre, cross them over the withers, and attach them respectively to the D's on each side—the near rein going to the off D, and the off to the near—so that the horse may not be able by any possibility to get his head down. He should then be ridden with the other reins. This method, which I have often tried with success in India, should be adopted only for breaking in, and not as a regular practice.

Saddling the Horse—The saddle should be passed backwards over the withers to a position just clear of the “play” of the shoulder-blades. Men who try to make

out that 'the horse has a longer "rein" and a better shoulder than he really has, often put the saddle three or four inches farther back with this object. Such "coping" dodges can deceive only the veriest tyro.

The idea that the saddle should be placed in the centre of the back of the horse, regarding him as a sort of four-legged table, betrays strange ignorance of the anatomy of the animal,—for the chief office of the fore legs is to support weight, while that of the hind is to propel it; hence, when the attainment of speed is our object, the saddle should be placed as far forward as possible without interfering with the working of the shoulder-blades.

Before girthing up, the groom should, if a saddle cloth be used, bring, with his finger, the front part of it well up into the arch of the gullet plate, in order to prevent it from being pressed down on the withers.

The front girth is taken up first, and then the hind one. We should avoid tight girthing, and should try to hit off the happy medium between the girths being so loose as to allow of the chance of the saddle slipping, and so tight that it would interfere with the horse's breathing. To lessen the possibility of the latter contingency, the girths should be placed well back from

under the animal's elbows, when he is being girthed up. The groom, when he has drawn the girths tight, should run his finger between them and the skin, from the near side to the off, so as to smooth out any wrinkles.

Some horses swell themselves out on being saddled, and consequently require to be walked about for a short time, after which the girths will have to be taken up afresh, before the rider can mount without incurring the chance of the saddle shifting its position.

For safety sake, the spring bars of a saddle should be kept always open. When they are so, there is not the slightest chance of the stirrup leather coming out, unless in the case of an indifferent rider, who puts all his weight on the stirrups, and who happens to perform in a very hilly country, or to scramble up a steep bank. The locks should be kept well oiled, if they be closed when used.

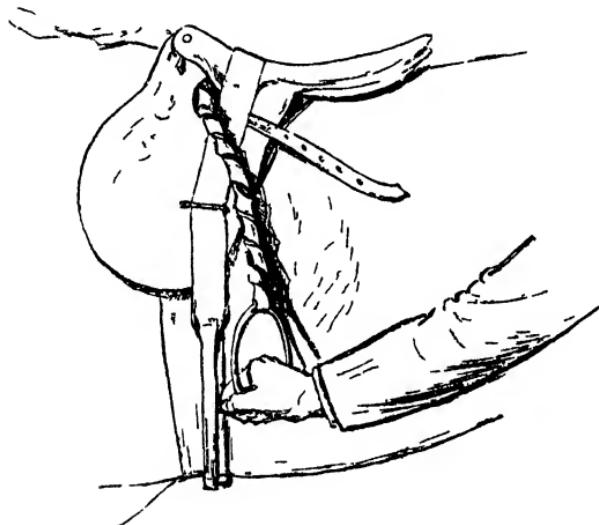
When a girth is too long, it may be shortened by taking a fold of the webbing near one end, passing the tongue of the buckle through it, and then attaching the buckle to one of the off girth tugs. This should be only a temporary measure, as it is apt to spoil the webbing.

A stirrup leather looks neatest on a saddle when the

loose end is passed to the rear between the flap and the leather, and immediately beneath the spring bar.

The following is a very useful plan for causing a stirrup iron to remain at right angles to the side of the horse, in case the rider's foot comes out, so then he may readily "pick" the stirrup iron up again. Twist the

Fig. 33.



stirrup leather in the direction the hands of a clock proceed, if on the near side, and *vice versa*, until it is pretty well shortened ; then pull it hard down (see Fig. 33) and let it go. On regaining its natural position, the leather will be found to have received a twist which will keep the iron at right angles to the horse's side. An

unskilful rider who "loses" his stirrup, often finds great difficulty in catching it again with his foot, if it happens to lie parallel to the horse's side ; while he will naturally feel "all abroad" if he is on a difficult horse, or is trying to negotiate a jump, unless he has the support of both stirrups. When the leathers are twisted, as I have described, the iron will be in the very best position for the foot to take it. It strikes me also, that in the event of a fall, the feet will come out of the irons a trifle more readily when thus arranged, than they would do without the leather having received a twist.

Choice of a Bit.

As, in all ordinary riding, we require to have perfect command over a horse, the double bridle will be found to be the best one for general use. We may, with it, ride on the snaffle as much as we like, and keep the curb for emergencies. With the bit and bridoon, men frequently, from not knowing how to hold their reins properly, get into the habit of always riding with an equal feeling on both reins, and then they not unusually blame the double bridle for being too severe. The snaffle is the queen of bits when used by a really fine horseman, or by a "mutton-fisted" rider. The former

can, by its aid, "get more out" of a horse, and control him better, than by means of any other bit; while the latter will do less harm, and will "stick on" tighter, while holding on to it, than he would do were he to use any form of the curb.

"When my friends have come to me concerning their unmanageable horse, I invariably find the poor animal has been overbitted, or wrongly bitted, and recommend the easiest kind of bit, which, in nine cases out of ten, succeeds" (*Latchford*).

The curb is especially useful for horses that "sprawl about" and require a good deal of "collecting," and, also, when it is necessary to "pull a horse together," when going through a heavy country, or when he is tired after a long run; for, from the peculiar action of the curb, the animal will, with it, far more readily bend his neck, and, consequently, arch his loins and get his hind quarters under him, than he would do with the snaffle. When the horse holds his head in a perpendicular position, or when it is kept so by means of a martingale, the pressure of the snaffle will act directly on his bars (gums), and will, if strong enough, cause him to arch his neck; but if he be allowed to poke his nose out, the pressure of the snaffle will be taken by

the corners of his mouth, in which case the indication afforded him by the rider pulling at the reins will be to slacken his speed, rather than to bend his neck ; hence the difficulty often experienced in "collecting" a horse with a snaffle. Oriental cavalry, who use a snaffle furnished with short spikes, have extraordinary power over their chargers, whose heads they tie tightly down by means of a standing martingale.

A large, plain, smooth snaffle is the best of its kind for ordinary work.

The *chain snaffle* is an excellent "all round" bit, especially for pullers. With light-mouthed horses, it may be covered with washleathcr (see page 192).

The *double-ringed snaffle* (see page 192) may be used for horses which bore to one side, or have to be at times turned sharply.

The *gag snaffle* (see page 193) is specially applicable for horses that "bore" their heads down, and for Australian buck-jumpers. By using both reins, the pressure may be regulated, so as to keep the horse's head in a proper position. Stonehenge remarks that "the gag snaffle is particularly well adapted to the double-reined bridle intended for pulling horses carrying their heads too low, which the curb has a tendency rather to increase than

diminish. The combined use of the two, however, corrects this fault, and a pleasant as well as a safe carriage of the head may be effected."

For a bad stargazer, that does not pull outrageously hard, I know no such efficient arrangement as that which may be obtained by connecting the reins of a snaffle respectively to the side pieces of a running martingale, after removing the rings of the latter, and then bringing them through the rings of the snaffle up to the rider's hands. This combines the effects of the martingale and of the running reins.

With a stargazer that pulls a great deal, a curb and standing martingale may be used, or a running martingale may be attached to the curb reins.

I think that, as far as appearances go, a double bridle, with a noseband, is the best to set off a horse which has a plain head ; and that a Pelham is by far the worst. A handsome bloodlike head looks best through a snaffle.

I have never seen a really fine horseman, with a snaffle, or a fairly good rider with a properly made and correctly adjusted curb, fail to hold the most determined puller.

CHAPTER VIII.

RACING SADDLERY.

Bridles—Martingales—Saddles—Stirrup Irons—Stirrup Leathers and Webs—Lead Cloths—Weight Jackets and Belts—Adjustment of the Racing Gear.

Bridles.—Unless in very exceptional cases, the ordinary plain or chain snaffle is the only kind of bit which should be used with the racehorse. The thin racing snaffle teaches him to pull, while the curb tends to make him raise his feet too high, and bend his knees too much, in other words, to gallop “round” (see page 201). In cases of doubt, a double bridle may be used, so that in the event of the rider not being able to hold his horse with the bridoon, he may have the bit reins ready to take up. Horses which can be held with a snaffle, gallop, as a rule, in far better form in it, than in a double bridle, even when the bridoon alone is used; the very presence of the curb seeming to deter them from going boldly up to their bridle.

A double bridle is less objectionable for steeplechase riding than for the flat, on account of the greater necessity there is for obtaining command over the horse, and for "collecting" him, in the former, than in the latter business. When it has to be used in a race, the rider, having previously ascertained the exact length of curbchain which suits his mount, should, before going to the starting post, see that the proper number of links, no more and no less, are taken up.

Horses which carry the head too low may be ridden in a gag snaffle (see page 241), or the cheekpieces of the headstall of the snaffle may be taken up a little (see page 235). One should be very careful not to adopt any method of arranging the bridle gear which might, in the slightest, check the horse's speed.

It is the present custom to use only one rein with the snaffle, even when a martingale is on (see page 81).

Martingales.—A running martingale will generally be required, for apart from its use in keeping a star-gazer's head down—in which case it will have to be somewhat shortened—it is, even when lengthened out, a most powerful aid in steadyng a horse in his gallop, in turning him, and in enabling the jockey to catch a firm "hold of his head." It is specially useful with

young horses that are apt to "yaw" about, and with steeplechasers.

The standing martingale (see page 219) has, in one or two instances, been used for cross-country work.

Saddles.—The first point to be considered about *racing saddles* is that they should be long and roomy, as well as light. A $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. or 3 lbs. saddle, all complete with irons, webs, girth and surcingle, ought not to be less than 15 inches in length ; while a 6 lbs. or 7 lbs. training or steeplechase one should be more than an inch longer.

The *steeplechase saddle* should fit as close as possible to the horse, without actually pressing on the vertebræ of the back, while all unnecessary stuffing and saddle cloths should be dispensed with, so as to avoid giving play to the saddle. It may be covered with doeskin in order to afford the rider a firm seat. Unless a very light one be used, it should be provided with spring bars for the stirrup leathers. The locks should be always left open.

Leaded saddles, which may be made to weigh a couple of stone, or even more, are very useful when dead weight has to be put up ; or for trials, when the trainer does not want his jockeys to know more than he can help.

The ordinary steeplechase saddle is similar to the

9 lbs. or 10 lbs. one which is used for training work, though it may be made as light as 4 lbs. all complete. Some exceptionally strong riders, such as Mr. Garratt Moore, are able to ride across country in a 2 lbs. racing saddle, almost as well as they can do in one five times the weight. Apart from the question of comfort to man and horse, such a very light saddle can hardly be expected to last more than one journey "between the flags;" for even if the tree escapes being broken, the gullet plate will be almost certain to open out, and, consequently, to press on the withers.

The Stirrup Irons of racing and steeplechase saddles should have plenty of room for the foot, so that there would be little chance of its being retained in the iron, in the event of a fall. I am convinced that when a man gets "dragged," it is on account of the stirrup being too small. I have known only one case of a rider's foot getting caught by its going through the iron. This solitary instance, in my experience, happened during a fall, when both horse and jockey came down. It seems impossible that a sufficiently large stirrup can retain the foot, unless its upper part first catches high up on the instep. To prevent this occurring, the steeplechase, and even the flat race, rider may have long heels

to his boots, which will prevent the irons working too far back on the foot. Most of us doubtless have felt when riding, with ordinary short-heeled boots, and with our feet well "home," the irons sometimes catch on our insteps in this manner. Very light racing boots have no heels. As light stirrups of inferior material are very apt to bend from the rider's weight, and consequently to catch on his feet, great care should be taken that none but those of the very best steel be used.

For racing saddles, the upper part of the eyes of the stirrup irons should be covered with leather, in order to prevent the iron from cutting the webs.

Stirrup Leathers and Webs.—For steeplechasing leathers are to be preferred to webs, as they are less liable to break, while, with them, the rider can pick up his stirrup much more readily than if he had webs, which have a great tendency, when loose, to twist and fly about, the moment the rider's foot quits the stirrup iron, when the horse is galloping.

The best kind of web is the "circular" one, the material of which is of a double thickness. The single web is apt to break and wear out quickly. With light leathers, the part through which the holes are punched should be strengthened, as is always done with webs, by

an extra thickness of leather, as the fracture, when it takes place, almost always occurs at the hole through which the tongue of the buckle passes.

Lead Cloths.—The trainer should have weight cloths capable of containing different amounts, with their own actual weights respectively marked on them. One or two cloths weighted with leather up to 4 or 5 lbs., will come in useful; while there should be one, at least, capable of carrying about 21 lbs., so as to obviate the necessity of putting on two small ones, for the saddle will then have less play than it would have were the latter employed.

Each pocket of the weight cloth is, usually, secured by a strap and buckle for safety sake. The only objection to buckles is that they prevent the flaps of the saddle and those of the pannal from lying flat on the weight cloth. Instead of buckles, the pockets may be secured by loops through which passes a strap that is sewn to the rear part of the cloth, and is attached to a buckle on its front part, which lies beyond the saddle flap. If the buckle be to the rear, the rider, when using the whip, might hurt his knuckles against it. To prevent a weight cloth slipping off during a race, it may be secured, on each side, by a strap and loop; the former being attached to the front part of the cloth,

while the girth strap passes through the latter. This arrangement will prevent the cloth from slipping backwards. It has no tendency to slip forwards.

The *leads* should be thin and very pliable, and may be covered with washleather, on which it is convenient to mark their respective weights, which will average about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. There should be a few light leads to make up exact weight. In order to obtain increased pliability, leads of half the ordinary thickness may be sewn up in pairs. Leads are covered with washleather, to prevent them from slipping out of the pockets of the cloth. They should be provided with "tags," so that they may be readily removed, if required.

Weight Jackets and Belts.—Instead of a weight cloth, a weight jacket may be used, in case the trainer wants to keep a trial "dark." The jacket should be made to fit tight, and should have pockets round the body to contain leads. In this way a stone or more may be carried. A shot belt may be used, for the same purpose, around the waist; it should be supported by shoulder straps. For a race, and particularly for a steeplechase, a weight cloth is much to be preferred to a weight jacket, as the latter impedes, and often hurts, the rider by the leads striking against his sides.

Adjustment of the Racing Gear.—The manner of putting on the *bridle* has been described on page 229.

The *martingale*, for ordinary racing purposes, should be of such a length that, when drawn straight up, the rings will reach to about the top of the withers. For steeplechasing, however high the horse may hold his head, it should never be so short as to make the pull of the reins to come below the withers.

The *saddle* should be placed just clear of the animal's shoulderblades and no more. For a training gallop it may be placed a little farther back, so as to lessen the strain on the fore legs, unless, indeed, the horse has a weak spot behind. The *surcingle* alone should pass through the loop of the running martingale, while its buckle should come low down, so as not to press against the horse's side and hurt him. A *pad*, about a foot broad, and eight inches long, with about four inches down the centre unstuffed, will be useful with a light racing saddle, to prevent the gullet plate from pressing on the withers. If there be danger of this happening, and a pad be not at hand, one may be easily made for the occasion, by taking a flannel bandage, folding it in two, and then rolling it up loosely from both ends, till the two rolls are within five or six inches of each

other. This improvised pad may be placed over the withers and underneath the pommel of the saddle. The tapes of the bandage may be previously removed. If a bandage be not at hand, a rubber may be folded and used in the same manner. By this plan, the gullet plate will be kept off the withers. Even when the gullet plate does not come down too low, a thin woollen pad is generally used to protect them, when a racing saddle is put on. A large sponge makes a good pad.

Leathers for steeplechasing should be twisted, just before the race, in the manner described on page 238.

As it sometimes happens that amateurs who are not particularly good horsemen attempt to ride over a country, I trust I may be pardoned by critical readers if I remark that the best way to make a saddle less slippery than it would naturally be to an indifferent rider, is, before mounting, to rub over the seat and flaps a little finely powdered resin. This is infinitely more efficacious than wetting them, or the insides of the breeches, with water. I would not advise any such practice to be adopted for ordinary riding, but, in a chase, especially when "the money is on," a man's first object should be to "remain" in his saddle.

New *girths* should not be put on for a race, as they will

stretch considerably, and may allow the saddle to shift its position, or even to turn round. A *silk girth* should never be used, as it will be almost certain to hurt the horse. It is infinitely better, instead of using a silk one, to put up a little extra weight in the form of a comfortable web girth. Girths should be as broad as possible.

A weight cloth should be placed well forward, with the leads equally divided on both sides. If there be an odd piece, it may be put in one of the pockets of the off side if the race be on a right-handed course, and *vice versa*. To prevent the horse's sides from being hurt, no leads should be put into the pockets over which the girth passes.



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